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ABSTRACT

This report identifies, describes, and analyzes exemplary elementary and middle school reform efforts for limited-English-proficient (LEP) students in grades 4 through 8 in language arts, science, and mathematics in 20 states; 75 schools were screened originally by telephone to identify those exhibiting excellence in high quality language arts, significant school restructuring, and implementation of a well designed English-language acquisition program. Fifteen sites were selected for 1-day preliminary field visits based on demographic, geographic, and programmatic variables. Eight schools total in California, Illinois, Massachusetts, and Texas were selected for more intensive field work. Findings reveal that LEP education is viable and that all such successful programs possess certain essential elements that provide segregated, specialized instruction combined with meaningful integration into an all-English instructional environment. Success results from collaboration between LEP instructors and English-proficient instructors, giving more block time to LEP instruction, and the existence of a comprehensive language and literacy development program that emphasizes the same kinds of activities. An appendix details selected schools and their programs. (NAV)

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SCHOOL REFORM AND STUDENT DIVERSITY:

Exemplary Schooling for Language Minority Students

Beverly McLeod

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Graduate School of Education and Human Development

SCHOOL REFORM AND STUDENT DIVERSITY:

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Executive Summary

American education is at a crossroads in some ways similar to that faced in the early part of this century. Then, as now, schools in some areas of the country encountered significant numbers of students who were not fluent in English. Then, as now, many of these students were from immigrant families, and many were poor. Then, teachers sought to give such students the basic skills in English and mathematics, and the appreciation for U.S. history and the American political system, that would enable them to become productive workers and proud citizens. Although some of those students succeeded academically, even graduating from college, most left school without a high school diploma, and many never learned to speak, read, and write English well. Nevertheless, like native English speakers with limited education, they were able to pursue a decent livelihood in America's manufacturing heyday, even without fluent English skills.

But the situation today is different in significant respects. Now, as the U.S. economy has shifted from an industrial base to one requiring workers to possess technological and analytical skills, schools are being asked to prepare all students to read and write at a sophisticated level, to think critically and apply their knowledge to solving real-world problems, to work collaboratively with others, and to become lifelong learners. A much higher level of English fluency and literacy is now essential, even for today's manufacturing jobs, than in the past. American society also now endorses the concept that all children, regardless of their background, be given a chance to excel in school. Today, it is neither socially nor economically acceptable to be content with a minimal level of education for any group of students. The challenge is to provide equal educational opportunity to all students, regardless of differences among students in English proficiency and other characteristics.

Schools that have successfully met this challenge have been able to offer students who are not yet proficient in English access to an academic program of high quality while at the same time guiding them toward full mastery of English. They operate on the premise that students are able to participate fully in challenging academic work despite their limited English skills. The elementary and middle schools profiled in this report have found ways to include such students as integral members of the school community. They have devised flexible programs that provide special language development assistance to students with limited English proficiency while simultaneously involving them in the full range of academic possibilities offered to English proficient students.

In contrast to concerns that education reform efforts will bypass such students, or even have deleterious effects on their achievement, the schools profiled in this report have been able to make education reform work *for* students who are not yet proficient in English. Using different strategies and models, these schools have worked to provide students with engaging, relevant,

cross-disciplinary curricula that encourage them to think deeply about a subject and use their own initiative to ask and answer questions. Schools have reorganized the daily schedule and the roles of teachers to maximize students' learning opportunities. They have found ways to personalize and individualize teaching, and they strive to make all students and their families feel welcome at the school.

One of the most remarkable features of these schools is their resourcefulness. Teachers and principals recognize the educational potential of unconventional resources and use them effectively. At these schools, time and collaboration are viewed as resources equally as valuable as money and personnel in providing students with a good education. These schools have devised inventive ways to maximize both the quantity and the quality of time available for students to learn and for teachers to plan instruction. The native language of students is also viewed as a resource for learning rather than an obstacle. By emphasizing meaningful communication, in whichever language students can use, these schools make a broad range of academic content available to students while they are becoming proficient in English. Another notable characteristic is the way in which, at each school, individual program elements fit together and reinforce each other to form a comprehensive whole. For example, common planning time for teachers allows collaboration; collaboration among teachers enables them to allocate time and other resources more efficiently.

The profiles of these schools are a diverse set of illustrative examples, rather than prescriptive models for educational improvement. Each school's program was developed to reflect and meet the needs of its own particular student body, teaching staff, and local environment. For other schools to be successful in educating their students who are not yet proficient in English, they will need to embark on a similar path of self-discovery and creation. Nonetheless, we hope that all schools can learn something of value from the examples described in this paper. By assuming the responsibility for improving and invigorating the school environment for students and teachers alike, the faculty and administration at these schools have demonstrated what is undoubtedly possible for a great many other schools in similar situations.

Introduction

Schools across the nation are facing the challenge of educating students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Today, more than one-fifth of school-age children and youth--nearly 10 million students--are from language minority households, in which languages other than English are spoken. About two-thirds of these youngsters themselves speak a non-English language at home, and more than one-third have difficulty with spoken English. In 1990, there were 31 states with at least 25,000 language minority students who speak a non-English language at home. Of these, Florida and Illinois each had more than 300,000, New York 700,000, Texas more than 970,000, and California 1.9 million. Such students represent more than 100 native languages, the most common being Spanish, French, Chinese, German, Vietnamese, Asian Indian, Korean, and Filipino.

Thus, many students come to school with limited English proficiency (LEP); their speaking, listening, reading, or writing skills in English are not sufficient to allow them to fully participate in traditional all-English core curriculum classes. Although federal and state policies have mandated special assistance for LEP students, they are more likely than English proficient students to drop out before completing high school.

More than 40% of LEP students are immigrants; they enter the U.S. school system with varying degrees of cultural and academic preparation, and at various ages. Schools are struggling to accommodate not only kindergartners who speak little English but have lived in the U.S. since birth, but also newly arrived teenagers, some of whom are illiterate in their native language and others who have had excellent schooling.

Language minority, LEP, and immigrant youth are highly likely to be poor, to be members of ethnic or racial minority groups, and to attend segregated and poor schools. Their families and communities may suffer stress resulting from inadequate health, social, and cultural services; low employment rates; and illegal and dangerous activities in their neighborhoods.

The dimensions of the challenge vary from state to state, school to school, and year to year. In Texas, more than 90% of LEP students are Spanish speakers, in New York only 60% are. In some schools the student population is stable; in others, student mobility during the year is high. Some schools encounter students from the same language backgrounds year after year; in others the population shifts rapidly.

Educating LEP and other language minority students to the same high standards that are now expected of all students will be a major challenge for the nation in the next few decades. How schools can best meet that challenge is the subject of a four-year study described in this report.

The Student Diversity Study

The National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning at the University of California, Santa Cruz, in collaboration with BW Associates of Berkeley, California, was contracted by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) to study good educational practice for LEP students. Researchers conducted a nationwide search for schools that have successfully met the challenge of educating LEP and other language minority students to high standards.[1]

The study sought to identify, describe, and analyze exemplary school reform efforts for LEP students in grades 4 through 8 in three curricular areas: language arts, science, and mathematics. Nominations were solicited from national, state, and local educators with expertise in LEP programs and curricular area programs. From the 20 states with the largest populations of LEP students, 156 schools were nominated, about two-thirds in language arts and one-third in science or mathematics. In contrast to the average school with a sizable population of LEP students, these schools had gained a reputation for the innovativeness and high quality of their educational program.

The 75 most promising sites were screened via telephone interviews to identify schools that exhibited excellence with regard to three major criteria: 1) high quality language arts, mathematics, or science programs for LEP students; 2) significant school restructuring, and 3) implementation of a well designed English language acquisition program. This process reduced the number of sites with potential for in-depth study to 25. Of these, 15 were selected for one-day preliminary field visits on the basis of demographic, geographic, and programmatic variables.

Finally, eight schools in four states (California, Illinois, Massachusetts, and Texas) were chosen for intensive field work. Half were elementary schools, selected for their language arts programs, and half were middle schools, selected for their science or mathematics programs.

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[1] The research team included Barry McLaughlin and Beverly McLeod from the National Center; Paul Berman, Beryl Nelson, and Katrina Woodworth of BW Associates; and Catherine Minicucci of Minicucci Associates. The final reports for the study, titled *School Reform and Student Diversity (Volumes I, II, & III)* are available from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC.

Schools were also chosen to represent the diversity of contexts in which students with limited proficiency in English are receiving an education. In some schools, LEP students from a single language background constitute the majority of the student body; in others, the student body includes LEP students from several language backgrounds. Some are neighborhood schools; others receive students from throughout the entire district. Each school was studied intensively by a fieldwork team, who observed classes and conducted interviews with teachers, principals, students, parents, district personnel, and external partners. Below are brief profiles of the eight study schools; more complete descriptions of each school are in the Appendix.

Del Norte Heights Elementary School in El Paso, Texas, is a neighborhood school with a stable population of 650 students, some of whose parents also attended the school. Spanish-speaking LEP students make up 40 percent of the school's population; 6 percent are recent immigrants. Eighty-five percent of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. Del Norte is located in a working class neighborhood of neat single family homes.

Hollibrook Elementary is a pre-K through fifth grade elementary school in an area of Houston, Texas, that is experiencing economic decline. The school is surrounded by large apartment complexes, most of which have major security and drug issues, and one of which is boarded up and scheduled for demolition. Eighty-five percent of its 1,000 students are Hispanic; 67 percent of the student body have limited English proficiency.

Linda Vista Elementary School, located in an inner-city, gang-plagued San Diego neighborhood, has experienced dramatic shifts in its student population, as the area is a point of entry for new immigrants. Currently, of its 1000 pre-K through sixth grade students, 44 percent are Hispanic (mostly from Mexico and Central America), 38 percent are Indochinese (Hmong, Vietnamese, and Laotian), seven percent are non-Hispanic white, five percent are African American, three percent are Filipino, two percent are other Asian, and one percent are "other." Two-thirds of the students have limited proficiency in English, and 88 percent are eligible for free or reduced-fee lunch.

Inter-American School, in the Chicago Public School District, enrolls 650 students in grades pre-K through eight. As a magnet school with a two-way bilingual program, it accepts about half Spanish-dominant and half English-dominant students each year. Most students remain at the school through eighth grade. It is a popular school, and for many years has had substantially more applicants than it can accept. The majority of the school's students (56 percent) are low income and 36 percent are limited English proficient. About two-thirds of the students are

Hispanic, 17 percent are non-Hispanic white, and 13 percent are African American. The school also enrolls a small number of Asian, Pacific Islander, or Native American students.

Graham and Parks Alternative Public School is a pre-K-8 school in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The school was named for local activist Saundra Graham and Civil Rights heroine Rosa Parks. The school population of 365 students is remarkably stable; more than 75 percent of the seventh graders have been enrolled at the school since kindergarten. One-third of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. Graham and Parks houses the district's bilingual program for Haitian students. Many of the Haitian students are malnourished and unschooled, and have been traumatized by the civil strife in Haiti; many have also been separated from their immediate family.

Evelyn Hanshaw Middle School is a seventh and eighth grade middle school enrolling 850 students. It is located in the small city of Modesto, California, in a low-income area with high unemployment and gang activity. Many families rely on seasonal agricultural work and income from welfare. One quarter of Hanshaw's students are on AFDC, and nearly the entire student body is eligible for free or reduced-fee lunch. Two-thirds of the student body is Hispanic; many of these students were born in Mexico. Nearly twenty percent of the students are of Southeast Asian origin. Twenty-nine percent of the students are classified as limited English proficient.

Horace Mann Academic Middle School, located in a dense, urban, predominately Hispanic immigrant neighborhood in San Francisco, enrolls 650 students in grades 6 through 8. Many more students apply to Horace Mann than can be accommodated under the district's open enrollment policy that is subject to a desegregation formula specifying that no more than 40 percent of the students at a school come from a single ethnic group. The school is attended by students from Hispanic (38 percent), Other White (20 percent), Other Non-White (13 percent), Chinese (14 percent), African American (9 percent), and Filipino (6 percent) backgrounds. Twenty to 25 percent of the students are limited in English proficiency; about two-thirds of LEP students are Spanish-speaking, and about one quarter are Cantonese-speaking.

Harold Wiggs Middle School is located in a neighborhood of single family homes in El Paso, Texas. It was the first middle school in the district and one of the first in the state. Wiggs enrolls about 1,000 students in grades 6 through 8. About 70 percent of the students are from economically disadvantaged homes and about 15 percent are from affluent families. Nearly 90 percent of the student body is Hispanic, and about 28 percent of all students are limited in English proficiency. A large majority of the LEP students are recent immigrants; some have had

consistent schooling while others from rural areas of Mexico have missed significant periods of time at school.

The project sought to describe what kinds of programs these schools made available to their students with limited English proficiency that distinguished them from most other schools. The project focused particularly on understanding the ways in which recent trends in education reform can be applied in a school context that includes significant numbers of students with limited English proficiency.

Although student linguistic diversity has increased dramatically, there is some concern that the implications of this new reality are not being fully considered by those advocating or undertaking school reform. An analysis of articles on school reform published in the *Phi Delta Kappan* during the past decade revealed that only 16 (4 percent) of 362 articles (fewer than 2 per year) even mentioned students with limited proficiency in English.[2] And a study of California schools in the process of restructuring found that schools often did not know what to do with these students.[3] The authors of these studies, and other advocates for LEP students, express the fear that education reform will bypass or even harm these students. Against this background, the current project focused on discovering and studying schools that had successfully embarked on a process of restructuring while simultaneously attending to the needs of LEP students. What features of reform had these schools adopted, and how did the schools incorporate these features into a multilingual student context?

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[2] Gandara, P. (1994). The Impact of the Education Reform Movement on Limited English Proficient Students. In B. McLeod (Ed.), *Language and Learning: Educating Linguistically Diverse Students*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

[3] Olsen, L., et. al. (1994). *The Unfinished Journey: Restructuring Schools in a Diverse Society*. San Francisco: California Tomorrow.

Features of Exemplary Schools

Although the study targeted particular grade levels and curricular areas, the analysis focused on the school as a whole. The project aimed to discover *how* these schools are able to provide LEP students with equal access to an academic program of high quality--what do they *do* differently from the traditional model of schooling? Although these exemplary schools differ from each other, they share several key features:

Inclusion

At all of the exemplary schools, the program for LEP students is an integral part of the entire school's restructuring effort. It is neither conceptually nor physically separate from the rest of the school. In contrast, at some of the schools nominated as reform innovators (but not selected for the study) all of the elements of the school were involved in restructuring except the LEP program, which remained isolated from the innovations.

But at the exemplary schools, inclusion does not mean immersion. If LEP students are not instructed in a pull-out or add-on program, neither are they expected to sink or swim on their own in the regular all-English program. The exemplary schools have devised creative ways to both include LEP students centrally in the educational program *and* meet their needs for language instruction and modified curriculum. Programs for LEP students are so carefully crafted and intertwined with the school's other offerings that it is impossible in many cases to point to "the LEP program" and describe it apart from the general program.The clearest example is Inter-American, a two-way bilingual school in Chicago, where the program for LEP students *is* the program for all students. Both LEP students and English fluent students are instructed in both English and Spanish and expected to become fully bilingual. All students develop literacy skills in their native language while simultaneously learning a second language. All students learn subject matter material through the medium of both languages.

But even the schools without a two-way bilingual instructional focus have designed their educational program to include LEP students. The proportion of LEP students at the eight exemplary schools ranges from one-quarter or less (four schools) to two-thirds (two schools) of the total student body. Whether in the majority or minority, LEP students are viewed as full participants in the academic and social life of the school.

One way to accomplish this is to form groups that include both LEP and English proficient students. Many of the exemplary schools organize students into larger-than-class groupings such as "families," "houses," "wings," or paired classes. Within these larger units, students can be grouped in various ways for different instructional purposes. For example, each seventh grade "family" at a middle school might include about 25 LEP students and 60 English proficient students. The LEP students might be instructed in social studies in a self-contained sheltered or bilingual instructional format, but be integrated with English proficient students in science classes.

These kinds of creative groupings give schools the ability to include all students by sometimes mixing different (language and ability) groups heterogeneously, and sometimes dividing them for instruction geared to their particular needs. At the exemplary schools, English language proficiency is not the great dividing line that it is at many schools; it is not the sole criterion for student assignment. The educational program at these schools is designed to address the varied needs of all the students, and English language proficiency is only one of the criteria used to group students.

Enrichment

The exemplary schools provide LEP students with a rich intellectual diet, not a remedial or basic skills curriculum. They expect all students, including those not yet proficient in English, to achieve to high standards in English literacy and other academic areas. They do not use a tracking system to organize students into fixed groups that receive substantially different curricula. Their approaches to curriculum and instruction are congruent with recent education reform trends, emphasizing depth, critical thinking, hands-on learning, relevance, exploration of process, connections across disciplines, etc.

Hollibrook Elementary School is guided by the Accelerated Schools philosophy, which advocates providing "educationally disadvantaged" students with an intellectually challenging curriculum. At Hollibrook, fourth graders were observed discussing various genres of fiction and non-fiction and then working independently writing their own books for an hour at a time. The next day they worked in pairs to read and analyze a work of literature, employing and discussing various reading strategies. Other elementary schools in the study use similar writing workshop, reading workshop, and readers theater approaches to guide students into developing a

high level of literacy. Students learn not just to read and write, but to engage in in-depth literary analysis.

At Del Norte Heights Elementary School, students participate in an Accelerated Reading program developed at the University of Wisconsin, in which they read books outside of class and take comprehension tests. Fifth grade students read an average of 42 books during the year; many were reading 150 pages per week by the end of the school year.

Exemplary middle schools in the study also provide students with a challenging curriculum. At Graham and Parks, students observe, record, hypothesize about, and experiment with the behavior of ants. They engage in scientific sense-making activities as if they were professional scientists. At Horace Mann, all students participate in the academic "challenges" posed by the Project 2061 curriculum, developed by the American Association for the Advancement of Science and designed to make students demonstrate mathematical and scientific information in real-life simulations.

At the exemplary schools, it is impossible to predict the degree of students' English proficiency, or the language of instruction in the classroom, by the quality of the curriculum. In other words, students at these schools were observed to be engaged in intellectually enriching activities in both English and in their native language. In the fourth grade class at Hollibrook, for example, some students spoke, read books, and wrote in Spanish, others in English. Students at Del Norte can select books to read in either English or Spanish. Students in the Haitian Creole bilingual instruction class at Graham and Parks have two teachers, both of whom are bilingual; one is a native Creole speaker and the other a native English speaker. Students' work may be in Creole, English, or both. At Horace Mann, LEP students were distributed among all the groups for the Project 2061 exercise; they worked together with English proficient students to design, build, and report on their models.

The objective in the study schools is to deliver a high quality curriculum, and to make it accessible to students, as far as possible, both in their native language and in English. The exemplary schools in this study do not view limited proficiency in English as an impediment to students' participation in rigorous academic work. At the same time that students are learning English, they are also reading high quality literature; writing reports, newsletters, and books; conducting scientific experiments on insects or on water salinity; and designing and building scale models of cities.

Flexibility

The exemplary schools studied in this project embody flexibility in several aspects of their educational program. Their language development programs for LEP students include a combination of bilingual, English as a Second Language (ESL) and sheltered approaches, designed to meet the needs of their particular mix of students. Several schools had changed their approach as the student population changed.

Programs have been developed at the schools to be responsive to students, their families, and local conditions. Haitian parents in Cambridge, Massachusetts, can choose to enroll their children in either the district's bilingual English-Creole program at Graham and Parks School or an all-English program at other schools. At several schools, parents can choose for their child either an all-English class or a class providing some support in Spanish. The latter type of class accommodates not only Spanish-speaking students with limited English proficiency, but also Hispanic students who are proficient in English but wish to develop their Spanish further, as well as non-Hispanic students who previously attended an English-Spanish bilingual school. This kind of program design allows schools to accommodate individual needs and preferences while providing LEP students with a flexible path to all-English instruction.

At the majority of schools, students and teachers form variable groups that change over the course of the day. Students can be grouped and regrouped for different instructional purposes. For example, at Linda Vista Elementary School in San Diego, California, students are grouped by English language ability, then native language, then mathematics proficiency, and then are mixed heterogeneously, each day.

Schools that provide a program of academic excellence to all their students have been willing to experiment with innovative ways to organize time and teaching resources. They have not been wedded to a traditional model of a single teacher instructing a single group of students, of having the same school schedule every day, of having instructional periods of equal length, or of assigning students on the basis of a single criterion. They have looked first at the needs of the students and designed a more complex, but much more appropriate, program of study.

Coordination

The schools in this project put a premium on coordinating both horizontally and vertically. Teachers of LEP and English proficient students at the same grade level meet regularly to develop their program collaboratively. Through team teaching, pairing of classes, and regrouping students, schools integrate LEP students with English proficient students while also providing them with targeted language instruction. Class schedules are designed to provide teachers of the same grade level or same academic subject with common planning time amounting to several hours a week during the school day.

Vertical coordination is also a priority. Four of the schools operate their own bilingual preschool or pre-kindergarten classes as part of the school's educational program. At some schools vertical coordination is achieved by having multi-year classes. Linda Vista School divides elementary school-age students into four developmental wings, each spanning about two grade levels. Hollibrook School in Houston offers continuum classes, in which a teacher and class of students remain together for several years. The program for Haitian immigrant students at Graham and Parks School in Massachusetts assigns students from grades 5-8 to a single class. Coordination between schools is less evident, although school personnel seem cognizant of the situation into which their graduates will go. Teachers at Wiggs Middle School in El Paso, for example, spoke of the need to prepare their students for the all-English environment of the local high school they would attend.

The schools in this project devote considerable time and effort not only to providing challenging academic instruction, but also to ensuring that the program as a whole makes sense. In other schools nominated as exemplary (but not selected for this study), pockets of excellence, like individual stepping stones, were impressive. But students risked getting stuck in the middle of their academic journey if the next stepping stone was missing or shaky. The exemplary schools, in contrast, are characterized by a coordinated program of overall quality, like a well designed system of roads, that charts a path--or several paths--for students.

Internal Impetus

At the schools observed, the impetus to undertake the challenge of school improvement seems to arise from within the school itself and to be sustained by the dedication and vision of the faculty. The teachers and principal are the driving force and key players in reforming the school's

program and designing and implementing innovative curricular and instructional approaches. They seek out external assistance when appropriate, but the process of change is clearly from the inside out.

Inter-American School was founded two decades ago by a group of parents and teachers who had a vision of bilingual education for their children, and the school continues to embody that vision. Other schools, although not founded by teachers, display a similar spirit, in which teachers are at the heart of the school.

The exemplary schools studied in this project have in common the features described above. They display an atmosphere of inclusiveness, provide all students with an enriched academic program, respond flexibly to student characteristics and needs, and are marked by a high degree of coordination. In most cases the faculty at these schools have been the agents primarily responsible for change. But what distinguishes these schools from the average school, even more than the ideals toward which they strive, is the way in which the ideals are put into practice. The next section describes how the exemplary schools translate the features described above into concrete programmatic elements.

Goals for Ensuring Access to High Quality Teaching

How have these schools been able to implement and maintain a program of academic excellence for all students? What do they *do* differently from the average school? Although each school in the study has a different profile, in various ways they all strive to accomplish the following:

Foster English Acquisition and the Development of Mature Literacy

All the schools in this study have a comprehensive language development program for LEP students, designed to help them learn English to a high level of proficiency. Schools use a variety of approaches, and combine several models of language instruction, to pursue this objective. As a rule, schools recognize that literacy in their native language aids students in acquiring English. Thus the schools support--and where possible provide instruction in--students' native languages. This is most common for Spanish-speaking students, but schools in the study also provide instruction in Cantonese, Vietnamese, Laotian, Hmong, and Haitian Creole.

Some schools foster the continued development of students' native language skills beyond verbal fluency or initial literacy; others do not. Seven of the eight schools offer bilingual or native language instruction to their LEP students. The eighth school relies on sheltered instruction, which is also used at two of the other schools with LEP students whose native language is other than Spanish and/or for Spanish speakers transitioning to all-English instruction. Each school offers a different combination of bilingual instruction, sheltered instruction, and ESL approaches to facilitate LEP students' mastery of English.

Several elementary schools follow a transitional bilingual model to support English acquisition, but each school modifies the model in different ways. For example, a Spanish-speaking LEP student at Del Norte School in El Paso would be instructed in Spanish 90 percent of the time in the early grades, decreasing to 40 percent of the time in third grade. By fourth grade, 80 percent of the instruction is in English, moving to virtually all-English instruction in the fifth and sixth grades. Other schools using the same general approach have different percentages of Spanish and English instruction, and begin the transition to all-English instruction earlier or later than at Del Norte. At Inter-American, where bilingualism is the goal for all students, instruction is 80 percent in Spanish and 20 percent in English in the early grades, moving to 50 percent each in the upper grades. Spanish-dominant students at Inter-American are also provided with focused

ESL instruction in the early grades. Linda Vista's daily schedule resembles that of secondary schools, in which students move from class to class. LEP students there receive instruction in their native language during one period each day, and instruction in English during the other three periods.

At the middle school level, schools face a more complicated challenge. Immigrant LEP students are frequently literate in their native language but know little English; they are also confronted with more difficult academic work than are elementary school students. The middle schools in the study use a combination of ESL, sheltered, and native language programs to teach students English while they also study other academic subjects. For example, at Wiggs Middle School in El Paso, Spanish-speaking LEP students are placed in a Beginning, Intermediate, or Advanced program depending on their English proficiency. All students have ESL instruction, and the Beginning and Intermediate students study language arts in Spanish. The Beginning students study all other subjects in a sheltered context, the Advanced students attend regular all-English classes, while the Intermediate students attend some sheltered classes and some regular all-English classes.

Regardless of the structure of the English acquisition program for LEP students, a significant feature of the exemplary schools is their scrupulous attention to students' transition to all-English instruction. Transition is a carefully planned series of steps, always supported and often individualized, rather than a sudden shift from one language environment to another. Schools place less emphasis on students' classification as LEP or FEP (fluent English proficient) than on their competent and confident progress in English. The schools' language goal for students is *full mastery of English* rather than *transition from native language to English.*

At Linda Vista, designated transition classes are offered as part of a sequence ranging from sheltered or bilingual classes at one end to all-English classes at the other. Students are placed where appropriate and move to the next level individually, at their own pace. At Linda Vista as well as at Graham and Parks, bilingual and monolingual English teachers work together in teams, giving students regular exposure to an English-speaking instructional model and thereby easing the transition to an all-English instructional environment.

Middle schools use a variety of strategies to aid students' transition. At Hanshaw Middle School in Modesto, California, LEP students who are deemed ready for all-English instruction are clustered together in core math/science and language arts/social studies classes taught in English by teachers trained in second language acquisition. A math teacher there reported that she

encourages such students to sit in on another class of hers to hear the same lesson again if they don't understand. Cantonese-speaking LEP students at Horace Mann Middle School in San Francisco may be partially mainstreamed after one or two years in a self-contained bilingual class. They take some of their classes in English with English-speaking classmates and return to the self-contained classroom for their remaining classes. Students who are partially mainstreamed are accompanied to their English-medium classes by a Cantonese-speaking aide.

At the exemplary schools, LEP students are rarely segregated from native English-speaking students for the entire day. Most schools integrate the two groups whenever possible, in both academic and social contexts, providing opportunities for LEP students to learn conversational English naturally from their peers.

Language programs for LEP students at these schools focus not only on the acquisition of English, but also on the development of mature literacy. All of the schools attempt to foster in students a deep engagement with reading and writing as processes. Students read authentic literature and conduct literary analyses--exploring plot, character, and theme--rather than simply reading for information or comprehension of facts. Students write journals, news stories, and books, subjecting each to a multi-step process of writing, editing, and rewriting. Language arts curricular approaches such as Accelerated Reading, Readers Theater, Readers Workshop, and Writers Workshop, commonly used with English proficient students in many schools, are also used with LEP students at these schools.

For a class of fourth graders at Del Norte School in El Paso, reading *James and the Giant Peach* involves not only understanding the story line but also drawing character maps of the three characters and using what they have learned about genres of writing to compose a persuasive letter from James to his aunts. At the same school, fifth grade students select books (at the seventh and eighth grade reading levels) and form a literature discussion group with others who choose the same book. Literature groups meet weekly to discuss the books' themes and characters, and students keep a log in which they write chapter summaries, opinions, and critiques.

The schools observed in this study use a variety of approaches to help LEP students master English. Each school has a well defined transitional program to lead students from native-language or sheltered classes to all-English classes. At the same time, all students, regardless of their proficiency in English, engage in thought-provoking literacy activities designed to produce highly competent readers, writers, and thinkers.

Deliver Grade-Level Content

While English acquisition and literacy development are viewed by the exemplary schools as primary goals for LEP students, an equally important objective is engaging in challenging work in other academic disciplines. These schools subscribe to the notion that all students are capable of a high level of serious scholarship, and they offer a rigorous curriculum to all students, regardless of their English language ability. A class of fourth, fifth, and sixth graders at Linda Vista uses laptop computers and Hypercard software to produce multimedia book reports. Middle school students at Graham and Parks conduct scientific investigations of water quality or ant behavior.

These kinds of opportunities to engage in challenging academic pursuits stand in marked contrast to the situation for most middle school LEP students. A previous study of LEP students in California[4] found that secondary schools often deny these students access to regular science and mathematics courses because of their poor English skills. At the same time, few of these schools offer a full sequence of comparable sheltered or native language courses in all academic disciplines. This situation effectively blocks many LEP students from taking courses essential for college entrance or even for high school graduation. How have the exemplary schools been able to provide LEP students access to high quality curricula? Such schools encourage the natural use of language for meaningful communication while offering a curriculum that is integrated across disciplines and emphasizes depth and hands-on learning.

Students are encouraged to use language to communicate meaningfully. This means allowing them to use their native language to ask or answer questions when they are unable to do so in English. In several of the classes observed, English is used by the teacher and most of the students most of the time. But students who are not yet fully proficient in English are able to participate by using their native language when needed, either with the teacher or with fellow students. For example, the students at Linda Vista work together to plan and produce multimedia book reports using computer software. They discuss who will draw the graphics, who will read the dialogue aloud, who will write the text, and who knows how to run the software program.

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[4] Berman, P., Chambers, J., Gandara, P., McLaughlin, B., Minicucci, C., Nelson, B., Olsen, L., & Parrish, T. (1992, February). *Meeting the Challenge of Language Diversity: An Evaluation of Programs for Pupils with Limited Proficiency in English.* 5 vols. Berkeley, CA: BW Associates.

The discussion is mostly in English, except for explanations about using the computer program, which tend to be in Spanish. In a physical science class at Hanshaw Middle School in California, taught in English, LEP students are concentrated in two of the groups conducting experiments on the salinity of water. Students in these groups spend extra time translating for each other and discussing in two languages, but still have sufficient time to complete the experiment.

The fifth grade students at Del Norte School in El Paso who participate in literature groups can read their selected books in either English or Spanish. In the fourth grade class that is reading *James and the Giant Peach,* most of the students read the book in English, but some recent immigrants are reading the Spanish translation. The teacher meets with these students and discusses the story with them in Spanish. She then leads a discussion with the entire class in English, asking some of the same questions that she had posed to the small group in Spanish. In this class as in several others observed, the teacher permits students to complete writing assignments either in English or in their native language.

In addition to encouraging the natural use of language for meaningful communication, the schools studied in this project also seek to make meaningful connections across academic disciplines. Their curricula reflect the kind of integration, depth, and hands-on approaches recommended by educators to guide students into critical thinking and complex understanding. For example, at Horace Mann Middle School in San Francisco, all 100 eighth graders gathered one day in the auditorium to demonstrate the results of a week's intensive work designing a blueprint for a sustainable, "violence-free community in the year 2000." Five groups each planned and built different models from wood, construction paper, paint, and aluminum foil. As they explained how their communities operate, they illustrated the scientific and mathematical concepts they had been studying. About one-quarter of the students, distributed among all the groups, had limited proficiency in English. Students at all levels of English proficiency were able to bring their ideas to addressing this real-life, socially relevant challenge.

In many cases, schools have adopted curricula that are relevant to the cultural backgrounds of their students. One year, Haitian students at Graham and Parks School studied acoustics by making traditional Haitian drums for a school play. At Inter-American, a Spanish-English bilingual school in Chicago, the schoolwide theme focuses on the Americas. One unit, centering around the Mayan civilization, began with students visiting the Field Museum to see an exhibit on Mayan culture, architecture, and religion. In social studies, students studied the geographic spread of the Mayan civilization as well as their religion and cultural traditions. In science, they learned about Mayan agriculture and architecture. In language arts, they wrote stories about the

Mayans. One curricular theme at Hanshaw Middle School focused on the Tuolomne River, which flows in the local area. Students studied the river in social studies, learning about how the California Indians used the river for food and travel. They learned about natural resources, ecology, and the food web in the life of the river. Students also took a field trip into the Sierras to see the river closer to its source.

A program for new immigrant students at Wiggs Middle School in El Paso organized a curriculum unit around the study of chilies. In social studies, students learned about the historic tensions between Mexico and New Mexico over the chili crop. In mathematics, students made graphs plotting the relative hotness of the chilies, studied crop yields in different parts of the world, and computed the yield of chilies by acre. Students created salsa recipes using fractions, adjusting recipe proportions for smaller and larger batches of salsa. In Spanish class, students read literature about the chili god and composed their own stories extending the myth. In science, students studied chilies during the unit on green plants; they dissected chilies and learned about chili seed dispersal.

The exemplary schools employ a variety of approaches to deliver grade level academic content to students who are not yet proficient in English. Some schools are able to provide instruction, or frequent clarification, in the students' native language. This option is particularly valuable for secondary school students; it allows them to keep up with their age-mates in academic study while they are learning English. Other schools make use of instructional materials in the students' native language to facilitate the students' learning and participation in an all-English or mostly-English instructional environment. Others use aides who speak the students' native language to assist students enrolled in regular all-English classes, or cluster together students from the same language background so that they can help each other.

Using curricular themes that are relevant to students' lives and that cross academic disciplines has at least three distinct benefits for LEP students. First, such curricular approaches engage their interest and motivation. Students are more easily able to comprehend and participate in classroom activities in which they can use their knowledge of their own culture, even if instruction is in English. Second, relevant and hand-on activities foster students' acquisition of English by increasing opportunities for natural conversation about meaningful topics--the optimal environment for language learning. Third, to accommodate interdisciplinary curricula, schools often allocate larger chunks of time for in-depth study, an arrangement that may assist LEP students. Students whose English is not yet proficient may find it easier to focus on three subjects per day for two hours each than on six subjects for one hour each, for example. While

reforming curricula to make subject matter relevant to students' lives, draw interdisciplinary connections, foster hands-on activities, and encourage in-depth exploration, are recommended as beneficial for all students, the positive impact is likely to be magnified for LEP students.

Organize Instruction in Innovative Ways

Traditionally, elementary schools are organized by class, with a group of students and a teacher staying together for all of their instruction during the year. Secondary schools are also organized by class, but students take several classes, with a different teacher and classmates, each day. Ability grouping is often used within elementary school classes, and between secondary school classes, to organize students.

In contrast, schools in this study create larger, more stable, and more flexible groups that incorporate students at all ability levels and all levels of English language proficiency. Linda Vista divides students into four "wings," each spanning about two grade levels from pre-kindergarten through 6th grade and each containing approximately 250 children; students receive all their instruction within their own wing. Students are assigned to language arts and social studies classes on the basis of native language or fluency in English, to mathematics classes on the basis of proficiency in mathematics, and to other classes heterogeneously. The organization of this school resembles that of secondary schools, in which students have a different set of classmates for each class throughout the day.

Horace Mann Middle School in San Francisco and Wiggs Middle school in El Paso, Texas, both divide students and teachers into "families." At Wiggs, student body and staff are organized into eight families--two at each grade level in grades 6, 7, and 8, and two additional families for newcomer immigrant students spanning all three grade levels. Each family has between 125 and 150 students; newcomer families have 50-60 students each. At Horace Mann, each family has about 100 students and four core teachers. Within the family, students are clustered into strands of approximately 25 students with whom they take their core content courses. Spanish-speaking LEP students are served within the family structure through Spanish bilingual strands.

Hanshaw Middle School is organized into five "houses," each with approximately 85 students and six to nine teachers per house per grade level. Each house is named for a campus of the California State University system to give students a tangible group identification and motivate

them to aspire to a college education. In each house, teachers working as a team have adjoining classrooms.

Teachers also work in teams at Hollibrook Elementary School in Houston, Texas, and at Graham and Parks in Massachusetts. The Texas school offers "continuum" classes, in which a teacher and group of students stay together for several years. The Massachusetts school has classes that span two or more grade levels, and students and teacher remain together for more than one year.

By means of different arrangements, all of these schools are striving to accomplish several objectives. First, by organizing into wings, families, or houses, or by having continuum classes and team teaching arrangements, schools seek to create a personal bond among a group of students and a group of teachers. Because the education of every student is the responsibility of a particular group of teachers, individual students are less likely to get lost in the shuffle, more likely to feel a personal sense of belonging to the school, and more likely to seek guidance from a sympathetic adult.

Some schools make an even greater effort to establish this kind of personalized atmosphere. At Linda Vista Elementary School, students attend a homeroom class for two short periods each day. At Wiggs Middle School, all students attend an Advisory period for the final half hour of the day. Because all of the teachers are assigned an Advisory class, the Advisories are smaller than regular classes; some have as few as nine students. Class time is devoted to helping students with individual academic or personal problems. Students report that the Advisory relationship with a teacher makes them feel more connected to school; it gives them the opportunity to "talk to a teacher like a real person."

For LEP students, even more than for English proficient students, having a sustained and personal relationship with a group of students and several teachers has distinct benefits. Students are afforded the time and stability that foster language acquisition, and their individual progress toward English mastery can be observed and assisted.

In addition to making for a personalized, individualized, inclusive educational setting, the school organizations described above are conducive to grouping students flexibly for different pedagogical purposes. The larger-than-classroom groups created by wings, families, house, or team teaching make it possible to temporarily assemble a critical mass of students who need the same type of instruction without having to keep this group of students together all the time. Being able to reach across traditional class boundaries to group students together means that

schools can more closely monitor and provide what students need in different areas. LEP students at these schools have the best of both worlds; they are full participants with other students in a wing, house, or family, and yet are able to receive instruction tailored to account for their language needs together with students who have similar needs.

Protect and Extend Instructional Time

None of the schools in this study follow a traditional time schedule, in which students do the same things every day for a roughly equal length of time. Instead, schools rearrange their daily schedule to fit curricular priorities. In many cases, this is achieved though block scheduling, in which students concentrate on a core subject (most often language arts, social studies, mathematics, or science) for an unbroken period ranging from 90 minutes to three hours.

The daily schedule in the upper wing at Linda Vista Elementary School features a long block for language arts, and shorter blocks for social studies and mathematics, each day. At Del Norte Elementary School, students study language arts in a three-hour block Monday through Thursday mornings; on Friday they study science. On Monday through Thursday afternoons, they study mathematics for nearly two hours; on Friday afternoon they study social studies for two-and-a-half hours.

Middle schools in the study also devote long blocks to core academic subjects. The seventh and eighth grade class at Graham and Parks School has a two-hour block for language arts/social studies and another two-hour block for mathematics/science. At Hanshaw Middle School, students take two core classes of 90 minutes each in those two subject areas. At Horace Mann Middle School, one core curriculum block spans the first two periods of the day; another encompasses the final two periods.

After setting aside large blocks to devote to core curricular subjects, schools often fill in the rest of the daily schedule with shorter periods of time during which students study specialized versions of core subjects, or subjects such as music, art, and physical education. For example, students at Del Norte have a 45-minute Enrichment Time every day before lunch. In groups smaller than regular classes, they study either Spanish as a Second Language, English as a Second Language, reading improvement, or reading enrichment. During the last 40 minutes of the school day on Monday through Thursday, students take classes in art, music, drama, or library research. They also take physical education for 45 minutes every day.

At Linda Vista, the final hour of the school day is called Afternoon Rotation, during which students participate in a science lab, science garden, art, music, physical education, or other elective subject. Each student takes two subjects for ten days and then rotates to two other subjects; within a thirty-day cycle, each student receives instruction in six subjects.

A flexible daily schedule has several benefits. First, having longer blocks of time to devote to core academic subjects encourages teachers to use thematic, interdisciplinary, project-based, and problem-solving instructional approaches. Students and teacher have enough time to delve deeply into a subject, make connections across disciplines, and develop critical thinking skills. Devoting an extended period of time to a single subject also allows LEP students the extra time they need to develop language skills in the context of subject matter study.

These exemplary schools not only use time efficiently during the school day, they also extend learning time for students by offering assistance outside of the daily class schedule. Several of the schools have after-school tutoring programs; one has a before-school and after-school program. At Del Norte, classroom teachers provide after-school tutoring twice a week for 45 minutes. They also staff an after-school reading program, and coordinate extracurricular academic programs. One, the national Odyssey of the Mind program, organizes teams of students to design and build a vehicle to take them on an imaginary journey, create the scenic background for their trip, and present their odyssey to judges and an audience. Students at Del Norte also participate in the University Interscholastic League, a literature-based program. Both Odyssey of the Mind and University Interscholastic League activities are available in dual language formats, facilitating the participation of Spanish-speaking LEP students.

Del Norte also offers a four-week summer school program that operates four hours each day. In addition to helping students who have made slow academic progress, summer school provides a way of extending language development for LEP students and reducing "forgetting time" over the summer months. Linda Vista accomplishes the same objective by operating on a single-track, year-round schedule. The school has four sessions of 9-10 weeks each, with four breaks of 3-4 weeks each during the year. During the breaks, the school offers half-day two-week intersessions. The year-round schedule diminishes the need for review at the beginning of the year, and eliminates the long summer breaks during which the English skills of LEP students often erode.

Expand Teachers' Roles and Responsibilities

Traditionally, teachers have been primarily responsible for preparing and delivering instruction. But the teachers at the schools studied in this project do much more than teach. Collaboratively, the faculty also perform some of the functions traditionally handled by district personnel, curriculum developers, department chairs, principals, and school counselors. Their roles are more diffuse, and their responsibilities greater than at a traditional school.

At all of the schools in this project, some of the governance functions previously residing at the district level have been assumed by the individual school. Together with parent volunteers on governance committees, faculty make crucial decisions about the organization and working of the school. At some schools, teachers have a voice in hiring new staff members. At others, faculty have control of the instructional or staff development budget for the school; they are the ones who set the priorities. At Hollibrook Elementary School in Houston, faculty prepare a staff development plan in congruence with the schoolwide improvement plan. At Inter-American School in Chicago, staff development is teacher initiated, with the staff coming to a consensus on the kinds of training they need.

A notable feature of teachers' working lives at the exemplary schools is the time and effort devoted to instructional preparation, often in conjunction with other teachers. This is possible because faculty have the joint responsibility of setting up the daily schedule for the school. At some schools, teachers decide among themselves whether and for how long to team teach or to offer continuum classes.

Block scheduling gives core academic teachers time to devote to curriculum planning during the school day. At Linda Vista, each teacher has two 45-minute preparation periods per week. At Hanshaw, teachers have 44 minutes each day. At Wiggs, teachers have two preparation times per day. Not only do the teachers at these schools have time during the day, but the daily schedule is designed to allow for common planning time for teachers who work as a team, or who teach the same subject, or who teach the same grade level. At Wiggs, for example, one of the preparation times is allocated to team planning. At other schools as well, teachers have common planning time while their students are studying non-core subjects such as physical education, art, and music. Because specific planning time is set aside, and because teachers at these schools typically operate within a family, wing, house, or team structure, teachers who have primary responsibility for teaching LEP students regularly collaborate with teachers of

English proficient students. This organization benefits LEP students in their transition into an all-English instructional environment.

In addition to having a major voice in their own professional development and the organization of the school, teachers at the exemplary schools are also heavily involved in curriculum planning. These schools are intellectually challenging environments for teachers as well as students. At Del Norte, for example, the faculty analyzed their students' performance on the Texas achievement test a few years ago and decided to focus on language arts instruction; a recent analysis led them to a new focus on strengthening mathematics achievement.

In several schools, external partners play a crucial role in curriculum development, instructional improvement, and teacher training. Del Norte collaborates with the mathematics department at the University of Texas at El Paso, Hollibrook with the Accelerated Schools organization, Linda Vista with the Apple Computers Classrooms of Tomorrow (ACOT) project and the National Alliance for Restructuring Schools, and Graham and Parks with the Technical Education Research Corporation (TERC). Hanshaw Middle School works with Susan Kovalik & Associates, Horace Mann with Project 2061, and Wiggs with the school of education at the University of Texas, El Paso. Inter-American does not have an external partner. Some of these external partner organizations are non-profit, others are for-profit institutions. Some focus on a particular curricular area, others emphasize schoolwide improvement and teacher professional development.

Teachers in these schools become full co-partners with the external organization, working collaboratively for several years with organization personnel to improve curriculum and instruction. At Horace Mann, for example, Project 2061 involves teachers in designing, evaluating, and refining the educational "challenges" presented to students. These teachers become educational researchers within their own school. External partners at several of the schools invite teachers to collaborate with them in writing articles for professional journals and making presentations at conferences.

Teachers have been instrumental in adapting curricula to the needs of their students. For example, the Project 2061 curriculum was not designed with LEP students in mind; the teachers at Horace Mann have been able to adapt it successfully for use by heterogeneous groups of students. On the other hand, the inquiry-based approach to science used with Haitian students at Graham and Parks was originally designed for middle school LEP students; it has since been adapted for use by younger students and by native English speakers.

Teachers at the exemplary schools are treated as education professionals rather than instructors. They are entrusted with key aspects of governing the school, directing the curriculum, and determining their own career priorities. Respect for their abilities and contributions is evidenced not only by the responsibility they are given, but also by more symbolic gestures. At one school, teachers can have a relaxed lunch with their colleagues in their own dining room. Instead of juggling cafeteria trays or munching on a sandwich at their desk, these teachers enjoy a respite from youthful exuberance while conversing with each other at tables covered with white tablecloths and set with adult tableware. At this and other schools in the study, there is a palpable sense of teacher empowerment and professionalism that benefits both teachers and students alike.

Use Effective Teaching Strategies

Teachers at the schools studied in this project were observed using instructional approaches that are believed to foster genuine learning in children. The kinds of curricula described above, in which subjects are studied in depth and in a relevant context, are supported by project-based approaches in which students are guided into asking questions, forming hypotheses, planning, reviewing, and completing an extended process.

Teachers were also observed doing the kinds of things that are conducive to language learning for LEP students, even in regular classes. At many of the schools, teachers of regular, all-English classes have been trained in second language acquisition theory and teaching techniques, and thus are able to present material in a way that makes it more accessible to LEP students.

In addition to supporting LEP students' mastery of English and other academic subjects through effective pedagogical methods, teachers at the exemplary schools seek to develop in students an enthusiasm about learning, a capacity for lifelong learning, and an ability to work with their peers. Teachers guide students into collaborative learning by making extensive use of cooperative work groups. They regularly arrange students into pairs or small groups to work on an activity cooperatively. The groups are carefully constructed; teachers assign students to particular groups for pedagogical reasons. For example, two LEP students with the same native language, one more fluent in English than the other, may be assigned together to an English-speaking group so that one can translate for the other. Or a student who has mastered a mathematical concept may be assigned to a group with several students still struggling to understand that concept.

Often, each student in the group is assigned a role, such as chairperson, recorder, organizer, manager, facilitator, artist, or timekeeper; the roles may rotate the next time the group convenes. The tasks for each role are well known by students. In some schools, a teacher makes consistent use of cooperative learning groupings during the year. In other schools, in which a teacher and class remain together for several grades, this process continues for years. In some schools, most or all of the teachers use cooperative work groups.

The consistent use of cooperative groups has several benefits. First, it minimizes the amount of time spent in non-academic activities in the classroom. Where cooperative work groups are an established part of the school routine and there are designated procedures to follow, students can start to work quickly because they know what is expected, they know what to do, and they have learned over time how to work cooperatively with each other.

Second, when students become skilled cooperative workers, they are able to move into groups and work without direction from the teacher for long periods of time. In one school, fourth grade students were observed working in groups for a hour; in another school, second graders worked continuously without teacher direction for one-and-a-half hours. It is important to note that these students were not doing busy work or filling out worksheets during these extended periods independent of the teacher; instead they were reading and discussing books among their group or drafting and revising pieces of writing.

Cooperative arrangements thus give the teacher increased time to work with students individually and in small groups. Because other students are able to work on their own, the teacher can devote attention to the particular needs of individual students. In the classes observed, teachers were able to spend 10-15 uninterrupted minutes with several individuals or several of the cooperative work groups during the class period. The project approach taken by the kinds of curricula described above also facilitates cooperative group work independent of continuous teacher direction.

Third, when students are given the opportunity to learn cooperatively, and are guided in how to do so, they develop an ability to work smoothly with others toward a common goal. Especially when used in conjunction with project-based curricula, cooperative learning arrangements convey the message to students that, working together, they can accomplish and learn much more than if they each worked separately.

Fourth, the use of cooperative groups is particularly valuable for LEP students for several reasons. If their group includes a native language mate whose English is more proficient, they can get immediate clarification if they don't understand what is being said. Even if no peer translator is available, LEP students working with other students on a common task are more likely to be able to understand and participate than if they struggled alone to comprehend directions from a teacher or textbook. LEP students in cooperative groups are also given many opportunities for exactly the kind of informal, face-to-face conversation that can strengthen their English skills and their sociolinguistic competence.

Finally, students working in cooperative groups establish a personal foundation for lifelong learning independent of the formal requirements of school by becoming skilled at using their own initiative and resourcefulness. Students working in cooperative groups learn from each other as well as from the teacher. In many cases, in fact, students are able to learn better from a peer who understands a concept or procedure than from the teacher. Students are encouraged to rely on their own resources, and to consult their fellow group members, before asking the teacher for help. In some classes observed, it is a formal rule that teachers should be approached for answers only if all the group members are stumped. Students learn that they have many self-initiated routes to finding the information they seek.

In addition to using cooperative work groups to foster the development of students' intrinsic desire to learn, the schools in this study reinforce that effort by according students a high degree of personal and academic respect. Students are often allowed choices, given control over their school environment, and encouraged to use their own initiative. In many cases, students can select which books to read, and which language to read and write in. Students can often schedule their own time to some extent, choosing when to work on which activity. Students lead class meetings. Students generate the list of reading strategies and the rules for classroom behavior that they themselves are expected to follow. Students direct the curriculum to some extent; they come up with questions, develop their own hypotheses, and design experiments to test their hunches.

Students in this kind of learning environment develop confidence in their own intellectual and social abilities. Their motivation to learn is nourished at the same time that they are guided into becoming competent learners, independent of continuous teacher direction. For LEP students especially, for whom the focus has often been on what they cannot do, providing them a forum in which to demonstrate their strengths and act on their own initiative is a powerful motivator for learning.

Address Students' Social and Emotional Needs

Many of the schools studied in this project are located in low-income neighborhoods, and at most schools a majority of the students come from poor families. The proportion of students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches ranges from 15 percent at one school to about 50 percent at two schools, 73 percent at one other and between 85 and 94 percent at the remaining four schools. The schools in this study have gone beyond offering programs of high academic quality to also address difficulties in their students' social environment. They have developed strategies to counteract the negative social influences in their students' lives that impede their ability to succeed academically.

The school counselor at Del Norte takes a proactive stance toward students' social and emotional needs by making classroom presentations at every grade level on topics such as study skills, drug awareness, child abuse, sexual abuse, the responsibilities of citizenship, self-esteem, dealing with strangers, and gang awareness. Many of the presentations are timed to coordinate with curricular themes. The counselor also works with groups of students identified by the district as being at risk for school failure. She brings together students who face similar issues for support and counseling sessions throughout the year.

Hollibrook relies on a multi-pronged approach to address students' social and emotional needs. An after-school activities program, staffed by teacher volunteers and a City of Houston parks department employee, operates seven days a week, and is designed to offer students a positive alternative to gang involvement. Because the area lacks youth recreation facilities, the school is joining with city and business leaders to build a park adjacent to the school campus. Hollibrook also employs two social workers as well as a counselor. The social workers, who are bilingual, maintain ties to the managers of the apartment buildings where many of their students live; they also work with city agencies and police, make referrals to outside agencies for counseling and health services, and help families obtain needed services from community agencies. Hollibrook also considers its continuum classes, in which students remain with the same teacher for several years, to be an effective way of addressing students' needs for a stable and positive social environment.

Other schools also have formal mechanisms for addressing students' non-academic needs. Horace Mann recently hired a social services coordinator to assess student needs and develop a system of services. The school is exploring a partnership with a local medical university in which medical interns will serve as nurse practitioners and counselors at the school. At Graham

and Parks, a student support team--consisting of the principal, parent liaison, assistant principal, nurse, school psychologist, teachers, and interns--coordinates student social services. The district also funds a Haitian resource room teacher and a Haitian mediation specialist, who provide individual and group counseling to Haitian students referred by teachers. The school works with Harvard University's psychiatric program and community mental health agencies to provide counseling to Haitian refugees who have had traumatizing experiences.

Hanshaw, where nearly the entire student population is poor, takes a multifaceted approach to addressing student needs. The school participates in a comprehensive resource center program called Healthy Start, a state-sponsored initiative to bring health care, social services, and mental health services onto school campuses. The Hanshaw Healthy Start program offers individual and group counseling, case management for families involved with more than one public agency, and referral to community agencies. A full service health and dental care program was to become operational in the summer of 1994.

Before Hanshaw opened, the principal interviewed 500 local families in their homes; he discovered that the parents of Hanshaw students had themselves had negative educational experiences and felt alienated from schools. Shortly before the school opened, the principal took teachers on a bus tour of the neighborhood in order to help them gain a perspective on the lives of their students. This understanding of the out-of-school environment in which students live contributed significantly to the way the school is designed and operated. The "house" structure, with each house named for a university campus, was chosen not only to encourage students to aspire toward a college education, but also to provide an alternative identification to the gang affiliations prevalent in the neighborhood.

Both Hanshaw and Wiggs have been influenced by the middle school model, formulated in part by the document *Caught in the Middle,* published by the California State Department of Education in 1987. The model pays particular attention to the social and emotional needs of young adolescent students for connectedness and meaning, and supports schools within schools such as "houses," extended core periods to allow students more sustained contact with a limited number of teachers, and learning centered on the real life issues students face outside of school.

Hanshaw also explicitly teaches life skills; a specific life skills curriculum is taught in the first month of school, when students are oriented to the culture of Hanshaw and expectations for their behavior. Life skills include integrity, initiative, flexibility, perseverance, organization, sense of humor, effort, common sense, problem solving, responsibility, patience, friendship, curiosity,

cooperation, and caring. Students are rewarded throughout the year for demonstrating these life skills with tee shirts, banners, and lunches with the principal.

All of the schools strive to validate and affirm their students' cultural identity, to instill in students a pride in their heritage and a confidence in their academic ability. Schools convey this message in a variety of ways. Many of the schools hire not only bilingual teachers but also bilingual staff members; they also have displays in hallways and classrooms reflecting the cultural heritage of their students. At Hanshaw, students are called "citizens" by the faculty and administration. Students in each "house" at Hanshaw visit "their" college campus and meet with college students from minority groups. At Horace Mann, September is "Awareness Month"; the schoolwide curriculum focuses on developing students' respect for diversity.

Involve Parents in Their Children's Education

The schools in this study make significant efforts to involve parents in their children's education and in the life of the school, and to address the social and educational needs of the families of their students. Schools strive to communicate with parents, often in their own language. This is facilitated by the schools' hiring of bilingual teachers and administrative staff. Linda Vista has a formal parent outreach committee and also employs three community aides. The aides call the homes of absent students, translate written materials intended for parents, interpret at parent-teacher conferences, make home visits about attendance or other student problems, and help families obtain medical care, clothing, and other needed services. At Horace Mann, all home-school communication is written in three languages (English, Spanish, and Cantonese); the school also employs a Spanish-speaking parent liaison. At Hanshaw almost all the staff of the Healthy Start program are bilingual in Spanish and English, and a Laotian college student conducts in-home visits with Laotian families to inform them of the program's services.

Schools also encourage parents to participate in making educational decisions for their children. Three of the schools are districtwide magnet schools; parents have chosen to send their children to Horace Mann, Graham and Parks, and Inter-American instead of neighborhood schools. At Del Norte, parents can choose to enroll their children in regular all-English classes or in classes that provide some support in Spanish. Similarly, assignment of students to continuum classes vs. regular classes at Hollibrook is done at their parents' request.

Parents also participate in school governance and in the life of the school. All of the schools have some degree of site-based management and involve parents on school governance committees. At Del Norte, the committee that assesses students' English language proficiency also includes a parent member. Schools invite parents to be a regular presence on the campus as classroom volunteers or in other capacities. Hollibrook has a designated parent center, a room in which parents can hold meetings, work on projects for teachers, and socialize with other parents and their babies and toddlers.

Several schools offer workshops for parents on parenting topics, study skills, gang awareness, communication skills, college awareness, and the like. Some also offer English classes for parents of LEP students; Hollibrook's Parent University program is staffed by parent volunteers. The counselor at Del Norte organizes a mother-daughter program that pairs students and their mothers with Hispanic professionals to help mothers aspire to a college education for their daughters and to expand the horizons of the entire family.

The faculty and administration at these schools have demonstrated a sensitivity to the influences of culture, family, and community on their students' academic experience, and have developed strategies for marshaling these influences as positive forces. Although the schools' primary mission is academic instruction, they pay attention to nurturing the whole child, thereby increasing the likelihood of their students' academic success.

Use Resources Wisely

The schools in this study are characterized by the ability to determine what resources are needed for mounting an exemplary program, to garner those resources from a variety of sources, and to use their resources efficiently. In addition to the wise use of material and financial resources, these schools have been able to provide a program of academic excellence by maximizing the allocation of other entities not traditionally viewed as resources, namely time and faculty talent and initiative.

Time is treated as one of the school's most valuable resources. As detailed above, the schools in this project use a variety of strategies to protect and extend students' learning time. The schools organize the daily schedule to create long blocks of uninterrupted instructional time. They minimize the types of interruptions that force students to shift their attention and lose valuable learning time, whether from bells and announcements over the loudspeaker or from pull-out

programs for LEP students. Some schools keep classes together for more than one year, reducing the time needed to orient students to classroom procedures at the beginning of the year.

Learning time is also extending in a variety of ways. After-school and summer school programs give LEP students extra time to master English and academic material. Working in cooperative groups gives LEP students more opportunities to practice English and to give and receive academic assistance than would be possible in the traditional whole-class setting, in which only one student can speak at a time. Cooperative working group arrangements also maximize the time that teachers have to give personal academic attention to individual students or small groups. Teachers' time is also considered a valuable resource to be managed wisely, whether in class or outside of class. Creating a rational daily schedule allows teachers at many of the schools to have a designated period every week during the school day to plan their instruction jointly. Instead of devoting an equal period of time to each subject, schools have matched the daily schedule to instructional needs.

Teachers and other school personnel are also considered valuable resources. The bilingual skills and training in language acquisition that many of the teachers at these schools possess are used in a number of ways, not only in instructing a class designated for LEP students. Teachers of all-English classes who have such skills and training are better able to understand the needs of transitioning LEP students in their classes and assist them academically. Teachers of sheltered classes who teach entirely in English but also understand the native language of their students can reduce students' frustrations and accelerate their learning. When a large proportion of the administrative and teaching staff have some bilingual skills and/or some understanding of second language acquisition processes, the school is better able to welcome, understand, communicate with, and design effective programs for LEP students and their families.

The collaboration in teaching and planning observed at these schools also allows for a more efficient use of teacher talents and interests. For example, at Linda Vista, mathematics is taught on a rotating basis. Each teacher takes responsibility for a "concept area," and students spend about four weeks on each concept area before progressing to the next teacher and area. By pooling their efforts and becoming specialists in a few areas in mathematics, teachers are able to deliver a higher quality mathematics program than if each teacher covered the entire mathematics curriculum.

At some schools, teacher resources are used effectively by allowing different teachers to perform different functions. One strength of team teaching is that it can decrease some duplication of

effort while capitalizing on the strengths and interests of more than one teacher. At several schools, the collaborative planning time of core curriculum teachers is protected by having other teachers take responsibility for students during this time. In other cases, extra instructors are marshaled for particular times of the day in order to provide students with individual attention. California schools make extensive use of classroom aides for this purpose. At Wiggs Middle School, all teachers have an advisory class of a small group of students. At Del Norte Elementary School, three additional teachers join the regular classroom teachers during Enrichment Time so that students can be divided into smaller groups.

Although this study did not make an extensive investigation of the monetary resources supporting these exemplary programs, it is important to note that the sources of funds and amount of money available to the eight schools, and the regulatory environment existing in the four states, varied dramatically. For example, the per-pupil expenditure in 1989/90 ranged from $4,150 in Texas to $6,237 in Massachusetts. The average teacher salary in the four states varied by as much as $12,000 per year. State law in Texas limits class size to 21 students in elementary school and 26 in secondary school. Massachusetts law limits class size for LEP students to 18 unless an aide is present. California state law allows no more than 33 students in kindergarten classes and 32 in grades 1-3. Several states, and the federal government, allocate extra funds for schools with LEP and/or poor students.

Both the flow of money into the school from various sources, and the way in which school funds are allocated, create a different picture for each school. Some schools use flexible financial resources to reduce class size for LEP students, others fund a full-day kindergarten, while others enrich general instruction in classes and eliminate pull-out programs. The assistance of external partners is purchased in some cases by school funds; in other cases their services are paid for by the federal government and provided at no cost to the school.

Improving Teaching and Learning for LEP Students

The first section of this report profiled what exemplary educational environments for LEP students look like--they are schools that include such students centrally in their mission and that have created a rational, step-by-step program that guides students toward mastery of English while simultaneously offering them an academic program of high quality. The bulk of the report described how schools have pursued this objective, and how they have been able to put into practice many of the recommendations of the education reform community. They have devised innovative strategies to reform curriculum and instruction, reorganize school structure, and make connections beyond school walls to produce young people who can become self-initiated, lifelong learners and productive citizens. In contrast to many other schools attempting these kinds of changes, the schools studied in this project have figured out how to include in their efforts students who are not yet proficient in English.

The task of educating these students while ensuring that they master English is only one of a wide array of significant challenges faced by these schools. Many of these schools serve poor students and are located in poor neighborhoods. The adults in these students' lives are generally not well educated, and may in fact be alienated from educational institutions. Students are often in physical and emotional danger from the ills of poverty--inadequate medical care, malnutrition, violence, drugs, and crime. In order to provide an education of high quality to their students with limited proficiency in English, schools are compelled to take a serious look at what these--and many of their other--students need to succeed academically and to develop into admirable young people. To truly include LEP students in a schoolwide effort to improve teaching and learning means to transform the educational experience for everyone at the school--students, faculty, and administration alike.

How successful have these schools been in their quest? The present study was not charged with evaluating the results of education reform efforts in these schools, nor with measuring the academic success of their LEP students. Measuring the achievement of LEP students is notoriously difficult, accompanied by unresolvable questions: In which language should they be tested? To which group should they be compared? Because of these difficulties, LEP students are often not tested at all, making it impossible for this project to gather achievement data for LEP students attending the exemplary schools.

It must be admitted that assessment is the weak link in the education reform effort; many more innovations have been tried than have been properly tested. Schools that have implemented new ways of teaching are usually still bound by state-mandated, standardized achievement testing that may tap different kinds of learning. This confused picture of assessment is illustrated by the situation at Inter-American School in Chicago. The Illinois Goal Assessment Program examination (IGAP) is required by the state, but the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) is the assessment instrument that has been adopted by the Chicago Public Schools. Inter-American students score much higher on the IGAP than on the ITBS. LEP students in Illinois are exempt from taking the IGAP, and LEP students in Chicago are exempt from taking the ITBS, until they have been in an English language acquisition program for three years. But Spanish-speaking LEP students in Chicago schools are required to take a Spanish-language achievement test instead.

While it was difficult for this project to determine to what extent the schools were succeeding in their efforts to improve student achievement, it is also a difficult issue for the schools themselves. Devising ways to measure their students' learning is an ongoing quest at most of these schools. Teachers at Inter-American rely primarily on a portfolio assessment system to gauge student progress, for example, but some teachers supplement this approach by also using published achievement tests in specific disciplines such as mathematics.

Del Norte's participation in the Accelerated Reading Program supports the school's efforts to prepare students for standardized testing. To get credit for books read outside of class, students must pass a computer-administered comprehension test. These tests help prepare students for the Language Arts section of the statewide achievement test--the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). Students manage the testing process at their own pace--they log onto the computer, choose the test for their book, and answer the questions. The computer program scores the test, gives the student the results, and maintains a cumulative record for each student.

Those who advocate new approaches to curriculum and instruction are struggling to develop appropriate measures of learning. So are several of the schools observed in this project. Horace Mann's involvement in Project 2061 engages teachers in a required process of documentation, review, and evaluation that takes a multifaceted approach to assessment. Before students begin their projects, teachers set goals and develop standards and criteria by which to assess student learning. Teachers observe students as they work and make presentations, recording their observations in fieldnotes. They also interview students and have them fill out questionnaires. In addition, students write evaluations of their peers' work, as well as of their own work, and are

administered pre- and post-tests on mathematics, science, and social studies concepts. In a group process, teachers analyze and interpret their data, and make suggestions for revising the challenges. In this way, teachers measure not only student success but also the success of the curriculum.

Linda Vista is engaged in a process of revamping its assessment system schoolwide. The newly evolving system measures student progress against school-developed learning outcomes that are based on California state standards in the various disciplines. Student progress is charted via an "electronic portfolio," in which student work is scanned and stored on a computer. Faculty at Linda Vista are assisted in developing the assessment system by a School Restructuring Demonstration Grant and by being designated as a Leadership in Accountability Demonstration school. These programs pay for staff development activities on alternative assessment and provide substitutes so that teachers can participate in assessment-related inservices and planning meetings during school time. The faculty are also assisted by two of the school's resource teachers, who play a major role in the implementation of the assessment system. In addition to assessing, placing, and reclassifying LEP students, and coordinating their curriculum, the resource teachers support classroom teachers by consulting with them about the standards and helping them decide which student work to keep in the portfolios.

While the project described in this report was not designed to measure changes in LEP student learning as a result of school restructuring efforts, what is clear is that these schools have been able to extend to LEP students the kind of educational experience that is presumed to lead to greater engagement and higher achievement among English proficient students. LEP students at these schools are involved in reading and analyzing literature, often beyond their own grade level.

They are learning to write, edit, and revise various genres of fiction and non-fiction. They are helping to design and carry out scientific investigations that sharpen their powers of observation, their critical thinking skills, and their ability to apply their knowledge. They are participating in some of the most advanced, nationally recognized, curricular efforts in language arts and science. They are learning to work cooperatively with each other and to use their own initiative. They study in an atmosphere that demonstrates acceptance of and respect for their ethnic, linguistic, and cultural identity. And in many cases, they are studying alongside English proficient students. Whether the LEP students at their school constitute a minority or a majority of the student population, the school has a comprehensive plan for helping them learn English and other academic subjects that is of equal quality to that offered to English proficient students.

While these kinds of learning experiences and opportunities make the LEP students at these schools among the fortunate few, there are still few avenues for gauging success and refining approaches. The challenge of aligning instruction with assessment continues to loom as a large--and sometimes unrecognized--problem, in the majority of the exemplary schools as well as in many other schools, districts, and states. New curricular emphases have not been matched with appropriate measures of student learning that are well understood and accepted by teachers, students, parents, and politicians. The discontinuity between what appear to be sound instructional practices, on the one hand, and the lack of agreed-upon means for judging their effectiveness, on the other hand, make these schools and their innovations vulnerable. One of the major policy recommendations to emerge from this study is that schools be provided with assistance in implementing performance-based assessments that are systematically aligned with content standards and language development goals for LEP students, including outcome assessments in students' native languages.

Conclusion

Two major conclusions can be drawn from this study of exemplary schooling for LEP students. The first is that it *can* be done. Against a background of concern that LEP students will not be beneficiaries of restructuring, these schools demonstrate that it is possible to embark on a process of education reform that simultaneously addresses the needs of LEP and English proficient students. In contrast to some schools,[5] in which efforts to replace tracking with heterogeneous grouping result in a sink-or-swim situation for LEP students, the schools studied in this project have managed to find a middle path that offers LEP students opportunities for segregated, specialized instruction combined with meaningful integration into all-English instructional environments.

The other major conclusion is that, while the schools structured their programs quite differently from one another, they all possessed the essential elements described in detail above. And in each case the elements fit together like puzzle pieces to form a coherent overall program. Each piece of the puzzle relies on the others for its success. For example, a smooth transition for LEP students from native language or sheltered instruction to all-English instruction depends on collaboration between teachers of LEP students and teachers of English proficient students, which in turn is greatly facilitated by setting aside common planning time during which these teachers regularly confer, which itself relies on a reorganized daily class schedule. As another example, it is impossible to implement an in-depth curriculum in social studies or science that requires LEP students to do extensive writing without a comprehensive language and literacy development program that emphasizes the same kinds of activities, which in turn requires teachers trained to teach in this manner, which may require faculty control over professional development budgets. To cite just one more example, focusing on subjects in depth is much easier given longer blocks of time; implementing block scheduling is sometimes (as in Texas) dependent on the school's ability to secure waivers from state mandates specifying how long each subject must be taught each day.

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[5] See Olsen et. al., op. cit.

The schools profiled in this report demonstrate that elementary and middle school faculty can work collaboratively to design and implement schoolwide programs that provide LEP students with equal access to an education of high quality. They also stand as examples of working models of education reform principles that can benefit all students, regardless of their current proficiency in English.

Appendix

Del Norte Heights Elementary School, Ysleta Independent District, El Paso, Texas
Grade Levels--K-6
Number of Students--650
% Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch--85%
% LEP Students--40%
LEP Student Language Diversity--100% Spanish
LEP Student Program--Spanish Transitional Bilingual

Del Norte is located in a stable working class neighborhood of neat, single family homes. A recently built apartment complex in the neighborhood houses families who are stationed at nearby Fort Bliss. The 27-year-old school building is well maintained and cheerfully decorated with student work and posters. The administration office feels cheerful and welcoming and office staff speak both English and Spanish.

Program for LEP Students
Del Norte's program for LEP students begins in kindergarten--the entry point for most LEP students at the school. Two of the five classes at each grade level from kindergarten through fourth grade are designated for LEP students. Through the second grade, LEP students receive 90 percent of their instruction in Spanish and the remaining 10 percent (including ESL instruction) in English. English language instruction increases to about 40 percent in the third grade and 80 percent in the fourth grade. By the end of fourth grade, most LEP students who entered the school in kindergarten or first grade are ready to be redesignated as fluent English proficient (FEP) and be assigned to all-English classes.

Two classes at the fifth grade level, and one sixth grade class, are called "split" classes, in which instruction is primarily in English with clarification in Spanish. Split classes are composed of LEP students who are not yet ready for regular all-English classes, as well as students who have been redesignated but whose parents request placement in split classes, newcomer immigrant students who are not fluent in English, and native, fluent English-speaking Hispanic students whose parents request assignment to a split class so that they can maintain their Spanish fluency.

All of the teachers in classes designated for LEP students and the split classes have both bilingual and ESL certificates and all are bilingual in English and Spanish. They have also received specialized training in language development.

Innovative Curriculum and Instruction Strategies

The fourth and fifth grade classes observed in the study emphasized whole language and literature-based approaches that foster students' acquisition of English while developing their ability to read, write, and discuss at a sophisticated level. The fourth grade class was studying *James and the Giant Peach*, and the teacher had them perform a dramatic Readers' Theater reading of portions of the story. She also led them in drawing character maps to help them understand the characters and their motivations, and assigned them to write a persuasive letter from James to his aunts. Del Norte students maintain reading journals, write news stories, illustrate books, and publish their work. They also participate in the Accelerated Reading program, in which students set goals for reading books outside of class, and take comprehension tests on completed books.

Several strategies make the language arts curriculum accessible to LEP students of varying degrees of English proficiency. Although upper level teachers use English most of the time, they also use Spanish as needed for clarification Students can choose to read and write in Spanish as well as in English. Teachers throughout the school use cooperative learning groups; desks in each classroom are clustered to facilitate cooperative activities. The use of cooperative groups enables students to assist one another and have numerous opportunities for language practice. It also enables the teacher to spend time with students who need help. In the fourth grade classroom observed, the teacher discussed *James and the Giant Peach* in Spanish with a group of new immigrants who were reading the book in Spanish; meanwhile the rest of the class was busy working on other tasks in cooperative groups. In the subsequent whole-class session, the teacher asked some of the same questions in English that she had previously directed to the small group in Spanish. This kind of previewing facilitated the new immigrant students' participation in the whole-class discussion. (Texas law, mandating a maximum class size of 22 students for all classes in grades kindergarten through four, also gives teachers the opportunity to individualize instruction for new immigrants.)

School Structure

The weekly instructional schedule allocates two large blocks of time each day for the core subjects of language arts and mathematics. On Fridays the large blocks are devoted entirely to science and social studies. Students have a smaller period each day (called Enrichment Time) for

specialized language and literacy study, and another period for one of several electives. Tutoring and other academic activities are available after school, and a four-week summer school is also provided. Faculty (including both teachers of monolingual English students and teachers of LEP students) hold grade level meetings several times a week to coordinate the curriculum. Teachers in the program for LEP students also meet to coordinate the curriculum across grade levels.

The school district supports site-based management; thus Del Norte faculty are heavily involved in governing the school. The committees on which they sit have control over the school budget except for salary items. Faculty have been involved in analyzing students' performance on the state achievement test to guide their curricular emphases and professional development priorities. Currently they are focusing on improving mathematics instruction in collaboration with a mathematics professor at the University of Texas at El Paso.

The school counselor takes a proactive role by making classroom presentations on youth issues and by forming support groups for students who share a common concern. In addition to working with groups, she counsels individual students, parents and/or families, and occasionally teachers. She has also organized a Mother-Daughter program to encourage families to aspire to a college education for their daughters.

A Chapter I Home Liaison conducts parent outreach activities. The school has a designated parent center for parent gatherings, thrice-weekly ESL classes, and parenting and life skills classes. The school regularly sponsors seminars on topics such as communicating with children, finding out about various careers, and becoming aware of youth gang recruitment techniques.

Hollibrook Elementary School, Spring Branch Independent School District, Houston, Texas
Grade Levels--Pre-K-5
Number of Students--1000
% Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch--87%
% LEP Students--67%
LEP Student Language Diversity--100% Spanish
LEP Student Program--Spanish Transitional Bilingual

Two-thirds of Hollibrook's students are from first generation Mexican immigrant families and have limited English proficiency. The school is located in a dense urban environment of large

apartment buildings, with few recreation facilities, parks, libraies, or other civic amenities. The neighborhood has major problems with drugs and violent crim.

Program for LEP Students

In the early grades (pre-K, full-day kindergarten, first and secad grades), instruction for all students is in both English and Spanish. In the third and fourt grade, students are expected to begin a transition to English instruction. In the fifth grade clases, English instruction predominates. The classes observed demonstrated the diversit of program approaches for LEP students. A fourth grade class consisted entirely of Spanish-spaking LEP students, while a second grade class team taught by two teachers had twice as many students and included native English speakers along with LEP students.

Innovative Curriculum and Instruction Strategies

Teachers in both classes used whole language/literature basedpproaches to developing students' language and literacy skills. Cooperative groupings facilitate tudents' in-depth engagement with reading and writing activities. Second grade students we observed working alone, in pairs, or in groups of three to produce a their own books. Thewriting process involved seven steps, in which students were to write, receive feedback from eers and the teacher, and revise their book. While students worked independent of teacher diction for a 90-minute period, the teachers worked with individual students for 10-15 minutes a time. In the fourth grade class, students also worked on writing their own books for an hour. The next day, students followed a sequence of Reading Workshop directions as they worked in airs to read and discuss an assigned book. While the majority of the students were engaged in this activity, the teacher worked intensively for 45 minutes with six newcomer student. In both classes, teachers spoke in English, clarified when appropriate in Spanish, and student could choose to do work in either English or Spanish.

School Structure

Hollibrook's educational program has been molded by the school's participation, several years ago, in the Accelerated Schools process, in which schools undergo a self-evaluation and develop a plan for improvement. The Accelerated Schools process contributed to the development of continuum classes, the bilingual approach, the strong emphasis on language development schoolwide, the creation of a full-day kindergarten program, the hiring of two social workers and one counselor instead of three school counselors, and a heavy investment in technology for the school.

In Hollibrook's continuum classes, students stay with the same teacher for a number of years. Both of the observed classes were continuum classes; the fourth grade class and teacher had been together since kindergarten. Teachers decide whether, and for how long, to form continuum classes or to team teach. Both approaches are designed to introduce stability into the children's lives in contrast with the mobility, unemployment, and social instability in the surrounding neighborhood, and to foster parent involvement in the school. Students have come to know each other very well over the years, and have developed the ability to work together smoothly. Teachers know their students very well, and can assist them on an individualized basis in making the transition to all-English instruction. Together, teachers plan the weekly schedule, and create time to jointly plan core subjects by assigning students to music, health, or physical education classes.

The school provides space for a Parent Center, in which parents can meet informally and take classes in the Parent University program. Two social workers maintain ties to the nearby apartment building managers, work with city agencies and police, make referrals to outside agencies for counseling and health services, and help families obtain needed services.

Hollibrook also runs an after-school activities program seven days a week. Developed as a gang prevention strategy, the program offers family and community recreation as well as academic tutoring. The program is staffed by teacher volunteers and a City of Houston parks employee.

Linda Vista Elementary School, San Diego Unified School District, California
Grade Levels--Pre-K-6
Number of Students--950
% Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch--88%
% LEP Students--66%
LEP Student Language Diversity--50% Spanish, 22% Hmong, 16% Vietnamese, 6% Lao
LEP Student Programs--Spanish Transitional Bilingual, Sheltered Instruction

Located in an inner-city neighborhood composed of government housing, inexpensive apartments, and public housing projects, Linda Vista serves a transient, multilingual student population. Students' parents typically work at low-skill jobs; many are unemployed. The neighborhood has significant problems with gang activity. Linda Vista's educational program is significantly enhanced by grants and partnerships with outside organizations that provide computer technology and training and support for restructuring efforts.

Program for LEP Students

Two-thirds of Hollibrook's students are designated as limited in English proficiency; half of these are Spanish-speaking, and the other half speak one of three Southeast Asian languages. The daily schedule for all students consists of four periods; LEP students are instructed in their native language during one of these periods, and in English for the other three. The longest period is a two-hour block devoted to language arts. Spanish-speaking LEP students are instructed in a bilingual language arts program. The program aims to allow students to attain Spanish language literacy at the second or third grade level before they make the transition to all-English instruction. LEP speakers of other languages are grouped according to English proficiency and receive sheltered language arts instruction. Students in both the sheltered and bilingual programs progress to all-English instruction individually at their own pace.

Innovative Curriculum and Instruction Approaches

Literature and literary expression serve as the core of the language arts curriculum for all students. Students produce biographies and autobiographies, directed and "free" journal writing, and dramatic interpretations of literature. An upper level class of Spanish-speaking LEP students who are making the transition to all-English instruction was observed at work creating multimedia book reports using Powerbooks (portable Macintosh computers) with HyperCard software. In addition to this project, students were also responsible for writing a book report on another, self-selected book.

The multimedia book report project is one example of the type of collaborative approaches that Linda Vista teachers at all grade levels make extensive use of. Student desks in classrooms are clustered together in several groups to facilitate cooperative activities. Because most teachers use cooperative learning groupings, most students are accustomed to this style of instruction by the time they reach the upper grades.

School Structure

The most striking feature of Linda Vista's educational program is the innovative way in which students are grouped. The student body is divided into four ungraded developmental "wings" (early childhood, primary, middle, and upper). The wings function like four schools within the school, each composed of students within a relatively close age range (typically spanning two grade levels), but with mixed levels of English language proficiency. Students receive all of their instruction within their wing, as opposed to a self-contained classroom as in most elementary schools. The instructional program in each wing is designed by the teachers in that wing. In the upper wing's daily schedule, consisting of four class periods, students are grouped

by English language ability or by native language for language arts and for social studies. They are grouped by mathematics level for the mathematics period, and are mixed hetergeneously for the final period of the day. Thus LEP students receive instruction in their native language for one period of the day, instruction in a sheltered or bilingual instruction format for a second period, and instruction in English, along with native English-speaking students and students from other language backgrounds, during the other two periods.

Linda Vista operates on a single-track, year-round schedule. During the four month-long school breaks, the school offers two-week intersessions. Students are dismissed early every Wednesday to allow for staff meetings and planning sessions. Each teacher also has two 45-minute preparation periods a week during the school day. The school makes use of resource teachers, part-time teachers, and paraprofessionals to assist regular classroom teachers. Linda Vista's staff have made professional development a high priority--one that is supported by a number of their grants and partnerships, including their designation as an Apple (Computers) Classroom of Tomorrow (ACOT) school, their California state restructuring demonstration grant, and their participation as one of 10 Leadership in Accountability Demonstration (LAD) schools in the district to increase student achievement through accountability. In contrast to other schools in the study, Linda Vista had made extensive efforts to revamp its assessment system to use portfolios to record students' progress toward specified learning outcomes or standards.

Linda Vista employs three community aides who take the major responsibility for reaching out to parents and the community. The three have been at the school for 15, 20, and 30 years, and are able to communicate with most parents in their native language. They follow up with parents on student problems, translate written materials from the school, interpret at parent-teacher conferences, plan and implement parent workshops, and help families obtain medical care and other services.

Inter-American School, Chicago Public Schools, Illinois
Grade Levels--Pre-K-8
Number of Students--650
% Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch--56%
% LEP Students--36%
LEP Student Language Diversity--100% Spanish
LEP Student Program--Spanish Developmental (Two-Way) Bilingual

Inter-American School was founded two decades ago by parents and teachers at a bilingual preschool who wanted their children to receive a bilingual elementary education. It is now a magnet program, the oldest of Chicago's ten two-way bilingual programs, with students applying for admission from throughout the school district. The district accepts roughly equal numbers of Spanish-speaking and English-speaking students to attend the school. Most Inter-American students enter at the pre-K level and remain through eighth grade.

Program for LEP Students

There is no special program for LEP students. Students from both language backgrounds are instructed in both languages and expected to become fully bilingual and biliterate in both languages. In pre-kindergarten the core subjects are taught in Spanish to all students. From kindergarten through the third grade, 80 percent of the instruction is in Spanish and 20 percent in English, with all core subjects taught in Spanish. Spanish-dominant students also receive ESL instruction and English-dominant student receive instruction in Spanish as a second language. The predominance of Spanish instruction is the early grades is designed to balance the heavy influence of the English language that students are exposed to in their out-of-school life. Instruction in English gradually increases in the middle grades; by the eighth grade about half of the instruction is in English and half in Spanish.

All Inter-American teachers are required to be bilingual. More than half of the teachers are native Spanish speakers; most of the others have excellent Spanish language skills. The librarian and the music teacher are the only non-Spanish-speaking staff.

Innovative Curriculum and Instruction Strategies

The language arts curriculum stresses whole language/literature-based approaches; teachers assign students to keep journals, and to write, illustrate, and publish their writing. A sixth grade class was observed as students participated in a regular class activity--reading stories they had written to members of a first grade class at the school. Stories could be written in either English or Spanish. In reading to the first graders, who were not as proficient in both languages as the older children, the sixth graders often had to explain ideas in both languages, or had to translate the story from one language to the other. The first graders gave the older students feedback on their stories, which will be useful to the sixth graders as they revise their writing.

Teachers throughout the school assign students to cooperative work groups. The use of cooperative groups dovetails with the instructional emphases; the sixth grade class was also observed in the midst of a writers workshop session as they consulted with fellow group

members. Students provided feedback on each other's writing to assist them in improving and revising their own writing.

The core curricular subjects at Inter-American are presented in the context of the schoolwide theme of the Americas. Because a significant number of the students are of African American heritage, the study of the Americas includes the study of Africa, especially as African history and culture have influenced the Americas. For example, African influences on the Caribbean islands are studied, since many Inter-American students have emigrated from those islands. The schoolwide theme serves as a unifying force that allows teachers to make cross-disciplinary connections and allows students to learn about their culture and the cultures of their fellow students.

Inter-American staff use student portfolios in conjunction with teacher-designed tests to measure student progress. Some teachers also use standardized tests to familiarize their students with that format. Teachers have participated in a series of staff development sessions with experts on alternative assessment approaches, and the staff has requested continuing training in alternative assessment methods.

School Structure

The weekly class schedule facilitates joint faculty planning by giving teachers common time during the week as well as a Friday afternoon session when students are dismissed early. Teachers at each grade level coordinate their activities and instruction, and jointly develop teaching units based on aspects of the schoolwide curricular theme. Some teachers develop a close working relationship and may team teach or share other instructional tasks.

The third, fourth, and fifth grade teachers are working together to develop and link their goals, objectives, and outcomes. One of the teachers pointed out that coordination and alignment across grade levels is especially important in a program with the goal of bilingualism, biliteracy, and delivery of a full curriculum.

Typically, staff development is teacher initiated, with the faculty coming to a consensus on the kinds of training they need. In the previous year, the staff had three months of in-service training on mathematics and science instruction, because those areas had been identified as schoolwide priorities.

Graham and Parks School, Cambridge School District, Massachusetts
Grade Levels--Pre-K-8
Number of Students--365
% Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch--50%
% LEP Students--25%
LEP Student Language Diversity--100% Haitian Creole
LEP Student Program--Haitian Creole Transitional Bilingual

Graham and Parks houses the Haitian Creole program for the entire school district. Haitian parents can choose whether to enroll their children in the program or in an all-English instructional environment. As a magnet school, Graham and Parks attracts students from all over the district; non-LEP students who apply for admission to the school are admitted through a lottery system designed to comply with the district desegregation plan.

Program for LEP Students
The Haitian Creole bilingual program is organized into multi-grade classes (pre-K and K, first and second grades, third and fourth grades, and fifth through eighth grades) taught by bilingual teachers fluent in Creole and English. The program goals for language development include the acquisition of literacy in both Creole and English; it takes most Creole-speaking students five or six years to become fully literate in English.

Each pre-K through third/fourth grade bilingual class is teamed up with a monolingual English class; team teaching allows flexible mixing and grouping of students. When LEP students are ready, they may receive regular all-English instruction for part of the school day. Newly mainstreamed students receive academic support from Creole-speaking staff after school in a homework center.

The fifth through eighth grade LEP class consists of 23 students taught by two teachers; one teacher is Haitian-American and delivers all instruction in Creole. Because of widely varying proficiency in English among students in this class, the teachers present important concepts in both English and Creole. Students can choose either language for their schoolwork.

Innovative Curriculum and Instruction Strategies
The science program at the school was collaboratively developed by TERC (a non-profit educational research firm located in Cambridge) and Graham and Parks teachers, under grants from the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education. The program

focuses on guiding students into using the inquiry method to explore science, in the same manner as professional scientists do. At the time the program was observed, the science curriculum was devoted to biology, particularly organisms such as snails, hornworms, and ants. The students were engaged in observing the behavior in ant farms under different conditions, forming hypotheses and then testing them out. Students conducted their scientific investigations in cooperative groups of three to five students. The teachers acted as facilitators while the students collaborated and questioned each other.

The TERC staff develop extensive background material for the teachers. Teachers attend two-week summer programs and then attend bi-weekly seminars with all the teachers in the Boston area working on TERC science projects. Participating teachers receive a $3000 annual stipend. TERC assists teachers not only in learning scientific material and the scientific method, but also in learning how to foster student initiative and discovery. The two bilingual teachers in the fifth through eighth grade class for Haitian students have been working with TERC for several years, during which they have learned to do scientific investigations and critically explore issues in their teaching.

Science at Graham and Parks before the TERC program consisted of a science specialist giving a science lesson once a week to each class. Now K-3 science classes studying growth are using approaches that the teachers developed in collaboration with TERC. Children measure the growth of a baby brought to class occasionally, or a pet dog. They videotape children walking and measure their strides. The science specialist likes the inquiry approach to science for all students, including monolingual English speakers.

School Structure

The school is organized into self-contained classes, each spanning two years (pre-K-K, grades 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, and 7-8; grades 5-8 combined for LEP students). Teachers stay together with a class of students for two years. In grades 7 and 8 there is a department structure with block scheduling that allows for sustained learning activities. There is a two-hour block for language arts/social studies and a two-hour block for mathematics/science. There is also common planning time for teachers in grades 7 and 8: they meet three times a week. All teachers meet half a day a month; there are team meetings every week.

The school maintains a student support team made up of the principal, parent liaison, assistant principal, nurse, school psychologist, teachers, and interns. Grants allow the school to hire external staff, including a bilingual parent coordinator. The district funds a Haitian resource

room teacher and a Haitian mediation specialist. They meet each week and take a case study approach to students referred by teachers, providing individual and group counseling. The school has some resources to deal with the mental health issues presented by recent Haitian arrivals, including a Haitian social worker on the staff who works with families. Social workers, who report that physical abuse is a serious problem in the Haitian refugee community, inform families about child abuse laws. Referrals are made to community mental health agencies and hospitals.

Evelyn Hanshaw Middle School, Modesto Unified School District, California
Grade Levels--7-8
Number of Students--860
% Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch--94%
% LEP Students--29%
LEP Student Language Diversity--79% Spanish, 10% Cambodian, 5% Lao, 3% Hmong
LEP Student Programs--Spanish Transitional Bilingual, Sheltered Instruction

Hanshaw, a new middle school that opened in 1991, receives students from five feeder elementary schools in low income neighborhoods of Modesto, a small city in California's agricultural central valley. One third of the parents of Hanshaw's students have only an eighth grade education. Twenty-nine gangs are active in the school's attendance area; gang graffiti is evident throughout the neighborhood. The new, modern school is the most beautiful building in the poor neighborhoods surrounding the school--and the only one free of graffiti.

Program for LEP Students
Many of Hanshaw's LEP students are continuing--they entered a LEP program in elementary school and continued as LEP students into middle school. These students tend to be orally fluent in English, but have limited English reading comprehension and writing skills; literacy in their home language is often irregular as well. Some LEP students are new immigrants; some of these newcomers have had excellent prior schooling and others have gaps in their education.

The school offers a full program for LEP students in science, mathematics, social studies, and language arts, as well as specially designed instruction to enable them to become literate in English. All LEP students participate in two 90-minute core courses (social studies/language arts and mathematics/science) and a daily period of ESL in lieu of an elective. Spanish-speaking LEP students are instructed in Spanish for the core subjects. LEP speakers of other native

languages are instructed in English using a sheltered approach. Advanced LEP students spend part of their day in sheltered classes and part clustered together in regular core math/science and language arts/social studies classes taught in English by teachers trained in second language acquisition. Tutorial services are provided after school by Modesto Junior College students for LEP students in the process of transitioning to all-English instruction.

Innovative Curriculum and Instruction Strategies

Hanshaw's curriculum and instruction philosophy was inspired by the school's work with an external partner, Susan Kovalik & Associates of Washington State. Kovalik works intensively with all members of the Hanshaw faculty during the summer and at weekend retreats and one-day seminars throughout the school year. The Kovalik approach stresses the importance of creating a threat-free learning environment for children. One cardinal principle that guides teachers' curriculum design decisions is the requirement that the lesson or skill must be relevant to the students' lives. Any child can challenge any teacher to explain the relevance of what is taught. The value on relevance to students' lives is reinforced by the presence of teachers who have experience in non-teaching occupations. One of the mathematics teachers had worked as a carpenter before earning her teaching credential at a local college. A science teacher had been running a children's museum in Modesto before she was hired to teach at Hanshaw.

Hanshaw teachers use curriculum themes to unify instruction across science, math, language arts, and social studies. Themes differ in their scope, the number of classes involved, and the length of time they are taught. Themes evolve over the years; activities that work are extended and those that don't succeed are dropped. Teachers cooperatively plan the themes and review the success of the activities at the conclusion of the thematic projects. Hanshaw's science and mathematics curricula use the California state curriculum frameworks for middle school as the starting point.

Hanshaw also has an explicit life skills curriculum, taught in the first month of school, which is designed to help students develop the kind of positive character traits, habits of mind, and skills that contribute to personal and academic success. Students are rewarded with "thunderbolts" for exhibiting behavior exemplifying life skills, such as flexibility and responsibility. Specific rewards, such as tee shirts, banners, and lunches with the principal, are given to students who accumulate a number of thunderbolts.

School Structure

One of the major forces behind the development of the Hanshaw philosophy is the principal, a man who had previously worked in several alternative programs for troubled, pregnant, or delinquent students. In the year that he was given by the district to plan the school, he interviewed 500 families in their homes. Based on this information, he and the faculty determined four guiding principles for the school--high expectations for all students (including Hispanics, the largest group at the school), support for the Hispanic experience, a meaning-centered curriculum, and a conscious effort to impart life skills as part of the curriculum.

The school is organized into five "houses," each named for a campus of the California State University system. Each house at each grade level contains six to nine teachers, including one or two teams of teachers for core subjects (mathematics/science and language arts/social studies). Students take their core classes and some of their electives in their own house, and some electives in other houses.

Hanshaw staff decided that high expectations for their students had to be conveyed in ways that were both symbolic and concrete. The affiliation of the houses with university campuses was designed to provide students with an alternative identification to the gang affiliations prevalent in the neighborhood, and also to encourage students to work toward college and feel confident that they could be academically successful. Students in each house visit their namesake campus each year, going to college classes with minority college students, meeting with a professor, and receiving a tee shirt and a diploma for their participation.

The school conveys an atmosphere of respect for students. Students are called "citizens" by the faculty and staff, a title intended to set a tone of dignity and respect. In the view of the principal, "The students are starving for routine and character building. They need relief from the violence in the community." Gang insignia and clothing are prohibited on school grounds. The school staff stress that school is a safe, neutral place, free of gang identification and conflict. Disputes among students are handled by a conflict management process run by students. Students wear the tee shirts of the college affiliated with their house as symbolic identification with their house and school. The beautiful modern campus sends a message to the community and to each student: "you are important and we care." The focus on "citizens," the thunderbolts recognizing positive behavior, the tee shirts and school song might seem transparently juvenile to adults, but they seem to appeal to adolescents who need to feel pride in themselves.

The daily schedule is organized to allow teachers common planning time of 44 minutes each day. There are monthly team meetings for all the teachers in each house. The science teachers meet informally every morning in the lab prep area to discuss lessons and share ideas. Teachers jointly make budget allocation decisions, except for salary items. The faculty exhibit a high degree of collegiality and enthusiasm, perhaps reflective of the recent inception of the school.

Social and health services are provided to students and their families via the Healthy Start program, under which the district entered into cooperative agreements with county public service agencies and private medical providers to bring a wide range of health and social services onto the Hanshaw campus.

Horace Mann Academic Middle School, San Francisco Unified School District, California
Grade Levels--6-8
Number of Students--650
% Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch--15%
% LEP Students--24%
LEP Student Language Diversity--63% Spanish, 23% Cantonese, 7% Other Chinese
LEP Student Programs--Spanish Bilingual, Chinese Transitional Bilingual

Horace Mann is located in a Hispanic immigrant community in the city of San Francisco. The school is promoted and recognized as an academic middle school and has a good reputation in the community. Under the district's open-enrollment policy, all students in the district can apply to their preferred schools; at Horace Mann, many more students apply that can be accommodated. Students are selected based on a lottery system driven by the district's desegregation policy, which specifies that no more than 40 percent of the students at a school can be from one ethnic group. The LEP students' backgrounds vary considerable, ranging from those who were born in the U.S. to immigrant parents to those who arrived in the country during the school year.

Program for LEP Students
The LEP student program at Horace Mann is intricately connected to the school's organizational structure. All Horace Mann students are placed into one of six "families," two at each grade level, of approximately 100 students and four core teachers. Students take all of their core classes (language arts, social studies, science, and mathematics) and some of their electives within their family; other electives and physical education are offered outside of the family

structure. All families are composed of heterogeneous student populations ranging from "gifted" to "resource"; there is no student tracking at Horace Mann. The family structure allows teachers to develop close relationships with students, it gives the students a sense of belonging to a group, and it particularly benefits LEP students because teachers have a deeper understanding of their language development.

Within the family, students are clustered into "strands" of approximately 25 students with whom they typically take their core content courses. Spanish-speaking LEP students are served within the family structure via Spanish bilingual strands. Non-Spanish-speaking LEP students are also clustered in strands where they are taught in English by teachers trained in language acquisition. While newcomer Spanish-speaking students are placed directly into the Spanish bilingual program, newcomer Chinese LEP students are served in a self-contained class that is not part of a family.

The Spanish bilingual program promotes English language development and Spanish language maintenance for LEP and bilingual students; the goal is biliteracy for all students. Students enrolled in the bilingual program receive half of their core course instruction (science and social studies) in Spanish and half in English (language arts and mathematics). The program is composed of newcomers, LEP students, bilingual students whose parents want them to maintain Spanish, and English-dominant students who have proficiency in Spanish because they attended a nearby Spanish-English developmental bilingual elementary school.

The program for Chinese LEP students employs a transitional approach. Only newcomer Chinese LEP students with very little English fluency receive primary language instruction, and maintenance of literacy in Cantonese or Mandarin is not supported. There is a small, self-contained class for newcomers in which they receive instruction in either Cantonese or Mandarin and English. After one to two years in the self-contained class, students are partially and then fully transitioned into a family via the strands designated for transitioning students. Teachers in these strands are trained in and experienced with the language acquisition process. Primary language support to transitioning LEP students is available from Cantonese-speaking aides.

Almost half of the teachers in the school are bilingual and all teachers are encouraged to get an LDS credential. (Many already have the credential; other are getting trained in on-site LDS classes.) There are three Cantonese-speaking bilingual aides and two Spanish-speaking bilingual aides at the school.

Innovative Curriculum and Instruction Strategies

Horace Mann faculty strengthen the academic program by making connections between the core subjects through the development of curricular themes. In conjunction with advisers from the San Francisco Project 2061, Horace Mann teachers challenge students to address real environmental and social issues of local and global scope. The use of active, cooperative, project-based learning experiences creates opportunities for peer interaction, providing a natural arena for language development as well as facilitating meaningful discussion of mathematics and science concepts.

While problems-solving strategies are used across all content areas, mathematics teachers in particular emphasize this approach in order to accommodate the widely varied academic levels of students in their class. As one teacher said, "Problem solving meets the needs of all children because they can come at a problem from so many different levels."

Most teachers base their student assessment system on portfolios and performance. These tools, as well as teacher-designed tests, are used to assess student progress toward specific schoolwide outcomes. In the Project 2061 curriculum model, learning outcomes are defined as part of the development of the Challenge; assessment tools--portfolios of student work, substantive dialogue with peers, projects, and cooperative performance--are embedded in the process of meeting the Challenge. In fact, the products and performances of the challenges are a critical part of the assessment, as they provide the evidence of reaching goals and benchmarks by demonstrating depth of understanding and competence in a range of skills.

In addition to the products of the Challenge, performances are used as assessment tools to provide insight into students' thinking, level of cognition, and ability to work as a member of a team. For example, in the Challenge that involved students in designing and building a scale model of a "sustainable, violence-free community for the 21st century," student progress and achievement were measured by teacher observation as students worked cooperatively on their project. Students were also assessed as they presented their work to a broad audience. In addition, students wrote evaluations of their peers' work, as well as of their own work, and were administered pre- and post-tests on mathematics, science, and social studies concepts.

School Structure

Horace Mann uses a block schedule in which students have two academic blocks each day; each academic class meets every other day. The block schedule provides time for students to carry out in-depth research and project-based work without interruption. Each family also offers an after-

school program for students who need extra help. The daily schedule provides built-in time every day for teachers to consult with individual students and to collaborate with each other to plan projects and integrate curriculum across subject areas. For example, as part of the faculty's commitment to mold an environment in which diversity is celebrated, each school year starts out with a month-long interdisciplinary unit that focuses on developing students' respect for diversity.

Site-based management has been implemented at Horace Mann through faculty committees and community advisory bodies. The faculty Curriculum and Staff Development Committee makes decisions regarding the spending of grant money and staff development offerings. Horace Mann staff have been entrepreneurial in terms of seeking supplemental funds and in-kind support. Two of the most prominent examples include the school's state-supported restructuring grant and its involvement with Project 2061--a national effort aimed at reforming science education. Both of these programs have led to considerable professional development for the faculty. Professional development activities supported by these and other grants and partnerships have focused on bicultural awareness, writing across the curriculum, mathematics across the curriculum, language acquisition, and alternative assessment.

Horace Mann is also using funds from the restructuring grant to expand its health and social services. The school recently hired a social services coordinator to conduct a needs assessment and recommend a more extensive integrated services program for the school. Horace Mann is also in the process of establishing a relationship with a local medical university in which the university will send their student interns to Horace Mann to serve as school-based nurse practitioners and counselors.

Harold Wiggs Middle School, El Paso Independent School District, Texas
Grade Levels--6-8
Number of Students--1000
% Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch--73%
% LEP Students--28%
LEP Student Language Diversity--100% Spanish
LEP Student Program--Sheltered Instruction

Wiggs is located in a neighborhood of aging single family homes. About 70 percent of the students are from economically disadvantaged families, and about 15 percent, who live in areas

farther from the school, come from affluent families. Wiggs' Hispanic students are a mixture of first, second, and third generation Mexican immigrants. A large majority of the LEP students are recent immigrants, but a few are LEP students continuing from elementary school.

Program for LEP Students

Located just this side of the Mexican border, Wiggs must assimilate a constant influx of students from Mexico. Most of the students arrive at Wiggs literate in Spanish with consistent previous schooling. In order to incorporate the newcomers, the school employs the Language Acquisition for the Middle School Program (LAMP), which consists of sheltered instruction with an intensive ESL component for newcomer LEP students. The program is supplemented by Spanish language classes and implemented by teachers who are trained in ESL and sheltered instruction approaches, as well as in their content area. Most of the teachers in the program are fluent in Spanish. LAMP classes are smaller than regular classes, averaging between 14 and 15 students per class.

The faculty at Wiggs designed a school-within-a-school structure, creating a series of smaller units or "families" at each grade level. The LAMP program is housed in two families--one for beginning LEP students and the other for intermediate students. Students in the LAMP families span all three grade levels at the school. The program's structure allows staff the flexibility to move a student from the beginning LAMP family to the intermediate family when he or she is ready to move. The program is also designed to accommodate newcomers arriving throughout the year. Students remain in LAMP classes only as long as it takes to prepare them to succeed in the mainstream instructional environment of the school. Once students are ready for all-English instruction, they are assigned to one of the regular families at the school.

Innovative Curriculum and Instruction Strategies

Wiggs has schoolwide themes around which the whole school plans its activities. LAMP staff develop thematic units for their families; they have designed a science curriculum to respond to the state's curriculum framework, and have related their curriculum to district-developed exit criteria. The LAMP science curriculum covers fewer topics than the regular science curriculum, but covers topics in the same depth. LAMP science teachers take more time with the topics and provide more experiments and other hands-on activities.

Teachers use the district-adopted English language science textbook as a reference for their students. El Paso has no district-adopted Spanish language science texts at the middle school

level. For newcomer students, teachers adapt the text to present the material in more accessible language, or provide source material in Spanish.

Organizing students into cooperative learning groups is a strategy prevalent throughout the school both in classes for newcomers and in all-English classes. Teachers of newcomer LEP students are engaged in helping their students master cooperative strategies, which are not typical of the schools in Mexico previously attended by their students.

Professional development activities at Wiggs are based on a schoolwide needs assessment. Wiggs has established a relationship with the University of Texas at El Paso that allows Wiggs teachers to participate in a mathematics institute that has helped restructure the school's mathematics curriculum. Much of the in-school training in recent years has been on implementing parts of the middle school concept, including effective use of student advisories, developing interdisciplinary units, and alternative assessment measures.

Twelve Wiggs teachers were designated as clinical technology teachers; they receive training in innovative instructional uses of computers through the University of Texas at El Paso. The teachers' classrooms have been equipped with state-of-the-art technology.

School Structure

Wiggs opened in 1987 as the first middle school in the district and one of the first in the state. The vision was of a middle school divided into families that allowed students to have instructional contact with a small number of faculty who could deliver curriculum and develop instructional activities appropriate to the students' stage of development. Wiggs student body and staff are organized into two families at each grade level, and two LAMP families. Wiggs has been designated as a state Mentor School; it serves as a model for other schools, especially those wanting to implement the "middle school concept."

Students at Wiggs have seven academic periods, a homeroom period, and an advisory period. The last half hour of the day is the Advisory period for all students in the school. Advisories are smaller than the regular classes; some are as small as nine students. Teachers use the time to get to know students and work with them on individual problems.

Teachers have an individual period each day that they can use for conferences for preparation. In addition, teachers have a second preparation period at the same time as other members of their team. Teams meet together on a daily basis to plan thematic units, work on common problems,

discuss strategies for reaching individual students, and plan whole family instructional activities. Mathematics and science teachers often collaborate on supportive themes. Similarly, English and social studies teachers develop complementary themes that allow student to explore the links between the two subjects.

About the Author

Beverly McLeod is a social psychologist who specializes in the areas of cross cultural relations, language, and culture. A former teacher of English as a second language, she was the project coordinator for the Student Diversity Study, a four-year study to analyze exemplary educational programs for LEP students. (The study was directed by Barry McLaughlin, of the National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning, University of California at Santa Cruz, and Paul Berman of BW Associatesof Berkeley, California. The research team also included Beryl Nelson, Catherine Minicucci, and Katrina Woodworth.) The author also edited a volume of papers presented at the study's conference--*Language and Learning: Educating Linguistically Diverse Students*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994.

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